

## Impressive in leather

Anthony Hobson

DENISE GID

Catalogue des reliures françaises estampées à froid (XV<sup>e</sup>-XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle) de la Bibliothèque Mazarine  
Two volumes, 725pp. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. 560fr the set. 2222 03388 8

It was not until after the mid-1530s that gilt leather bindings became at all common in France. Decoration had before then normally been in blind. Various groups can be distinguished: a Carolingian group, identified by Jean Vezin; the Romanesque bindings, studied by G. D. Hobson and most recently by C. F. de Hamel; the fourteenth and fifteenth-century covers decorated with rows of repeated figured tools, potentially of great interest but still awaiting their historian; the gothic panels of the early sixteenth century, described also by Hobson and by Robert Brun; and the roll-tooled bindings of the same period. Of the last the *Catalogue des reliures françaises estampées à froid (XV<sup>e</sup>-XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle)* de la Bibliothèque Mazarine is the first systematic investigation.

Denise Gid calls these blind-stamped bindings "reliures de protection" and takes a poor view of their aesthetic qualities. It is true that after centuries of wear most of them have a shabby look, but when fresh from the binder's shop they must have made a lively and attractive impression. The panels were often finely engraved with popular saints or familiar scenes from the Bible calculated to appeal to an intending purchaser. Some conveyed simple messages, such as the Flemish pair of Hope matched with the suicide of Lueretia, symbolizing Despair.

The Bibliothèque Mazarine was an ideal choice for Mme Gid's research. Based on Mazarin's bequest to the Collège des Quatre Nations and augmented at the Revolution by books from Parisian religious houses, its holdings escaped the ravages of nineteenth-century rebinding through the parsimony of a curator who had the covers patched by the library attendants. The present *Conservateur en chef* deplores the harlequin-like effect this produced, but at least the original ornament has in consequence survived.

This catalogue contains 700 entries arranged two or three to a page. Each records the author, title (or titles, if the volume is a collective one), printer, place and date of printing, and format; the dimensions and material — usually calf or sheep — of the bindings; details of the spine, edge-decoration and clasps or ties. The pattern of the ornament is indicated, with the tools, rolls or panels employed. Next come ownership inscriptions, followed by a list of similar bindings in French libraries. The presumed place of binding completes the description. Each entry is illustrated on the facing

page with a reduced rubbing of part of one cover. Some tools and all panels and rolls are reproduced on ninety-eight plates in the second volume, the rolls being classified by subject on the model of J. Basil Oldham's *English Blind-stamped Bindings*. There are indexes of books and manuscripts, of authors, of printers arranged alphabetically and by town, of owners and of binding shops.

It would be hard to conceive of a catalogue planned on a more generous scale. To give only one statistic: Gid illustrates 687 rolls, over 50 per cent more than Oldham listed for the whole of England. Nevertheless this is not the "French Oldham". It is the record of a single library and makes no claim to be comprehensive. This has its disadvantages: some of the rolls are hard to "read", partly because they differ only in minute detail from others, partly because the example rubbed was in poor condition and the rubbing is therefore blurred. But it also has great advantages. Oldham presented his conclusions magisterially, without indicating where the original bindings were to be found or what works they contained. Here the information is set out in full and the reader can make his own deductions.

A detailed catalogue of part of an ancient library surviving in original condition cannot fail to provide information about book collecting and the book trade. The sample throws light, for instance, on the ability of Parisian presses to meet local demand; 59 per cent of the books bound, and therefore sold, in the capital were also printed there, 10 per cent elsewhere in France, 15 per cent in Italy and 11 per cent in the German language area. There are numerous discoveries: a Romanesque binding unknown to Hobson (though seen by de Hamel), bought by an early owner from "Blavus, the beadle" (thus recalling the Archdeacon of St Andrews, who as late as the eighteenth century was the university book-binder); a binding with plaquettes by the Master of the Orpheus Legend; three unrecorded panels; a new Grolier (Pomponius Mela, *De situ orbis*, Vienne 1518); and books that belonged to Étienne Dolet in prison before his execution, to the humanist printer Henri Estienne, to Rabelais and to the Lyonnais collector Benoît Le Court.

Two hundred and fifty-six sixteenth-century bindings are ascribed to Paris, sixty-eight to Lyons, six to Troyes, one each to Reims and Rouen. Other attributions are to provinces (Champagne, Normandy, Berry) or to larger geographical units (Centre, East, West). These judgments are the result of many years of research. By 1972 Gid had already examined 5,000 volumes. She has explored provincial libraries and archives, and studied the collections of two priors of the Sorbonne, Johann Heynlin's, now in Basel, and Ludwig Ber's in Colmar. Her attributions are based on a combination of evidence: watermarks, early ownership, regional differences of technique, which as a working binder she is ideally equipped to distinguish. In articles published

elsewhere she has identified the *matériel* of Macé Panthoul, a bookseller and binder of Troyes, and of an anonymous Lyonnais shop patronized by Benoît Le Court.

It must be admitted, however, that she ignores previous literature and some of her attributions fly in the face of received opinions. She ascribes the Grolier binding to Lyon, at first sight an attractive theory, since the collector might have bought the book in 1520 when he was in Lyon for his marriage to Anne Brignonnet; but the binding belongs to a group which Howard Nixon convincingly associated with the Parisian bookseller Pierre Roffet. She attributes the panel-stamped bindings of three works by Haymo of Halberstadt to "Haute Normandie". Belgian scholars have established that two of the panels were used in Antwerp; the third, apparently unrecorded, seems also to be of Netherlandish origin. All

## Bound to interest

David McKitterick

GEORGES COLIN (Editor)

*De libris compactis miscellanea*  
437pp. Aubel: Gason/Brussels: Bibliotheca Wittockiana. 4,900 Bfr.

In the last two years the Bibliotheca Wittockiana, a museum and research institute founded on the acquisitions of the Brussels collector Michael Wittock, has become established as a vigorous centre for the study of the history of bookbinding. Early last year it played host to a notable exhibition (accompanied by a no less notable catalogue) of Belgian fine binding in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (the exhibition moved on to the Arsenal in Paris). *De libris compactis miscellanea*, the first in the series *Studia Bibliothecae Wittockianae*, ranges more widely, its eclecticism and the multinationality of the contents reflected in the choice of Latin for the title. The editor, Georges Colin, is both director of the library and a senior member of the Bibliothèque Royale Albert I<sup>er</sup>, and his own energies, coupled with those of the publisher, Pierre M. Gason, have attracted a formidable array of contributors.

Of the fifteen essays, students of the English book trade will find Mirjam Foot's account of the few known general price lists agreed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries especially suggestive: they offer much to help unravel the economic structure of the retail book trade during this period — a rather different question from the bespoke bindings that often command attention. This is important new ground, known before but not explored, and her study epitomizes the approach of many of the articles, which see bookbinding less as a minor decorative art than as a subject to be properly understood only in relation to many

three volumes belonged to a priest of the Omer, then a part of Flanders. Another stamped binding is described as "plumes en Cnen". The panels may indeed have been engraved in Normandy, but they were owned by Richard Faques, a London stationer of Norman origin; one bears his trademark, a maiden's head. The binding is English; it contains an early English owner's name and a leaf comes from an indulgence printed by Pynson.

Other examples could be cited, but they do not detract from the value and importance of Denise Gid's achievement. Her explorations have been on the scale of a Livingstone; she has filled in, at least in outline, what was previously a blank on the map. We must hope that her colleagues will eventually provide complete corpora of French rolls — a massive task, and, somewhat less daunting, of panels.

Other facets of the history of the book trade assumption, for example, is fundamental to Ian Doyle's study of the origins of books belonging to Durham Cathedral Priory and Anthony Hobson's of dealings between bookbinders and booksellers in sixteenth-century Rome. It is clear, too, in the enormous work by Walter Neuhauser of the late sixteenth-century Tyrolean printer and binder Gals Dingensauer, which offers much on the contemporary book trade in the area as well.

Other contributors seek ways forward by different means — most obviously, perhaps, Konrad von Rabenau in a plea for a "Haebler", to replace Konrad Haebler's book of sixteenth-century stamped bindings published in 1928. In the first essay of all, Jean Vezin approaches his subject from a technical viewpoint, following in the footsteps of the late Graham Pollard and examining the survival of a collection of *libelli* assembled in the sixteenth century and now in the Bodleian Library. In Oxford, too, Paul Morgan draws on his own unrivalled knowledge of the local library to offer supplementary notes to the work of J. B. Oldham and others on English blind-stamped bindings. Two general essays will be turned to repeatedly for enlightenment. Neither Albert Derolaz on goffered edges nor Gilles Barbaron on French binding vocabulary in the eighteenth century claims to be comprehensive, and both tackle subjects that deserve more attention.

Few recent collections of articles on any aspect of the history of the book have commanded quite such an internationally distinguished body of authorities. The only real lament note is the deplorable lack of an index. The quality of illustration, whether of blind-stamping, gilt tooling, or pencil rubbing, is generally outstanding. The Bibliotheca Wittockiana (whose address is 21-23 rue du Bernal, 1190 Brussels) has made a most auspicious beginning.

# TLS

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"Knappe mit Flugzeug", about 1932, by Jankel Adler; it is reproduced from *Jankel Adler 1895-1944* (256pp, Cologne DuMont, DM78, 3 77017719)

## Under the aspect of the Zeitgeist

Robert Brown

COLIN LOADER

*The Intellectual Development of Karl Mannheim: Culture, politics, and planning* 261pp, Cambridge University Press, £22.50, 0521 265673

It is not easy to do justice to the variegated career of Karl Mannheim. Born a Hungarian Jew, he made his reputation as a German social theorist at the universities of Heidelberg and Frankfurt in the 1920s, and then took refuge in Britain in 1933 from the Nazis, became a lecturer in Sociology at the London School of Economics and finally, for the year before his death in 1947, the influential and eminent Professor of Sociology and Education at the Institute of Education in London.

Always a reformative Marxist, meta-historian and social philosopher, Mannheim was also a founder of the sociology of knowledge, sometimes an economic planner and often a social psychologist concerned with the future of British education. His publications run to a dozen volumes; he was for ten years a leading member of the Moot, a group of Christian intellectuals - John Middleton Murry, Christopher Dawson and T. S. Eliot among them - that discussed the possible role of Christianity in mass-democracies; and he was a tireless advocate of the social benefits of sociological knowledge. In the first two decades after his death, the attention paid to Mannheim's ideas was relatively small, especially when compared to that lavished on his compatriot and mentor, Georg Lukács. In the past decade, however, two of his early monographs have been translated and published in *Structures of Thinking*, there have been a number of books in English on Mannheim, and his views on ideology and on the sociology of knowledge continue to be referred to in the professional journals.

Colin Loader, the author of this latest study of Mannheim's work, agrees that Mannheim is "one of the most underrated and misunderstood thinkers of the twentieth century", and undertakes to correct this by describing how the various phases of Mannheim's thought developed as attempts to deal with a specifiable set of persisting concerns and problems. While *The Intellectual Development of Karl Mannheim* is avowedly descriptive and classificatory rather than critical and evaluative, Loader obviously thinks that Mannheim's reputation will rise as his views become better understood. This belief is, perhaps, unduly optimistic, for a considerable part of Mannheim's attractiveness as a social thinker, especially in his early work, lies in the tantalizing impression he often gives of referring to, and relying upon, important truths that lie just beyond the limits of the reader's comprehension. To understand all may be to forgive much less. Thus *Utopia*, his best-known book, Mannheim said that "ideology" (in the more general sense of the term in which it refers to someone's world-view), "presupposes simply that there is a correspondence between a given social situation and a given perspective, point of view". But what sort of connection, or correspondence, is this? In the mid-eighteenth century Helvetius is said to have claimed that "Our ideas are the necessary consequences of the societies in which we live". Mannheim spent years in trying to specify the ways in which a world-view is, or can be, the consequence of its adherents' social situation. The claim has an initial plausibility; yet the more Mannheim elaborated on it the more mysterious became the nature of the connection. In the end, he offered only (autologies and) commonplaces: for example, the tautology that "the historical and social genesis of an idea would only be irrelevant to its ultimate validity if the temporal and social conditions of its emergence had no effect on its content and form"; and the commonplace that a *Weltanschauung* is only the expression of the entire life of a social group.

There is a similar obscurity in Mannheim's notion of a "synthesis of perspectives". This was the suggestion that each distinct social group or class in a society interprets social life in general, and the common good in particular, from the perspective of its own position in the system. Each such perspective gives rise to a different "current of thought" - a particular kind of utopia or political self-deception, or self-interested action, for example - and the conflict between these different currents leads people in modern societies to be sceptical about the possibility of any objective knowledge concerning their social life. Marxists, said Mannheim, had first created, and then used, this scepticism in order to reveal the class basis and hence limited applicability of their opponents' views. Yet Marxists could not prevent themselves from being similarly judged, despite Marx's own claim that the proletariat was a universal class because its demands for the restoration of the social conditions of human dignity applied to everyone.

In rejecting this claim Mannheim proposed a different candidate as the guardian of objective knowledge. This was the free-floating intelligentsia - free-floating because it was so heterogeneous in social composition and so varied in the perspectives it embodied that the

essay he asks: "Is it possible to determine the global outlook of an epoch in an objective, scientific fashion? Or are all characterizations of such a global outlook necessarily empty, gratuitous speculations?" Mannheim's affirmative answer was never seriously in doubt since he held the common view that reference to *Zeitgeist* was an essential feature of understanding the cultural life of a period, that the way to understand or interpret any specific changes in art styles, for example, was in the end to relate them to a particular global outlook. But if he had given a negative answer, and taken into account the strong grounds for doing so - that global outlooks are never any more than selected aspects - he would have spared himself many unnecessary puzzles. He began by holding the ordinary Marxist view that Western societies were facing a crisis - economic, social and cultural - as a result of the transformation by capitalism of traditional communities into modern civil societies. To

crucially dependant on the power of a set of social planners to carry out wholesale and long-term reforms. Because he specifically rejected piecemeal social engineering, it is somewhat misleading of Loader to defend him against Sir Karl Popper's famous attack on holistic engineering in *The Poverty of Historicism* by retorting that Mannheim did not, as Popper did, "equate the attempt to understand the total structure of society with the necessity of changing society in its totality". This is obviously not the entire truth since Loader himself immediately goes on to paraphrase Mannheim as saying, in *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*, that "planning, like tradition, was able to grasp society as a whole end, like invention, was able to cope with social change". But if planners are able to do what Popper argued that they could not do - allow for unforeseen consequences and create democratic personalities - and if Western capitalist societies require, according to Mannheim, very extensive and centrally planned renovation, then why should Mannheim's planners now equate "grasping" society as a whole with acting to change society as a whole? Are large-scale planners to be forbidden to make large-scale changes?

Loader divides Mannheim's work into three main periods: the early phase, up to 1924, when he was interested in the relationships between cultural life and philosophy; the middle phase, represented by *Utopia* (1929), in which his interests were those of a political scientist; and the third or British phase, 1937-47, concerned with his ideas on democratic planning. Unfortunately, the useful simplicity of this scheme is complicated by Loader's introduction of two "transitional stages" that link the other three by containing work which foreshadows that of the next phase. The value of such minute subdivision is not at all clear, though it does parallel Mannheim's own somewhat obsessive interest in the creation of numerous categories, a large number of which remained completely idle, and an even larger number of which were simply heuristic devices and *alides-memoire*. Nevertheless, for Loader, as for Mannheim, there are divisions into problems, programme and solutions; and for the latter, at least, there are immanent and extrinsic methods, systematic and genetic approaches, interpretations and explanations. There are also the combinations of these three pairs. In addition, we must bear in mind the three levels of meaning - "objective, expressive, and documentary" - the distinction between signs and formations, between rational and non-rational totalities, between sociology and cultural sociology; each with its three varieties of pure, geocultural and dynamic. The actual work done with the aid of these, and many other categories is minimal. But Loader takes them seriously enough to frame his account of Mannheim's intellectual development in terms of his chronological progression through the various sets of categories that he either invented or borrowed in the course of his career. The effect of this is to make Loader's account a curiously programmatic treatment, as though Mannheim's creation of categories was in itself a worthwhile activity.

However, while a passion for pigeon-holes is not always a substitute for thought, in Mannheim's case the passion was joined to an odd reluctance to make use of what he had created. He produced examples for his categories rather sparingly, and did so, as if they might distract the reader from the even tenor of the general and abstract argument. In fact, since Mannheim had a positive distaste for brevity his examples are often the most concise way he has of making his point. In his German period they stand as lemons in a sea of turbulent abstract nouns - *history, art, philosophy, culture, positivism* - which interact among themselves without any apparent need for human agents. For instance, in an essay entitled "Historicism" Mannheim wrote:

There is no more relativistic solution than that of a static philosophy of Reason which acknowledges a transcendence of values "in themselves", and sees this transcendence guaranteed in the *form* of every concrete judgement, but relegated the material content of the judgement into the sphere of utter relativity - refusing to recognize in the actual historical course of the realizations of values any principle of approximation to the transcendence values as such.

There are four things to be said concerning



A cast iron motif, simply entitled "Edinburgh" in John Gay's *Cast Iron* (112pp, Murray, Paperback, £5.95, 07195 42308).



## Popular paradoxes

Michael Banton

SERGE MOSCOVICI

*The Age of the Crowd: A historical treatise on mass psychology*  
Translated by J. C. Whitehouse  
408pp. Cambridge University Press. £30 (paperback, £10.95).  
0521 257743

Over the past thirty years social psychology has gained greatly in rigour and made increasing use of the experimental method. Serge Moscovici, professor at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris, nevertheless fights for one of the lost causes of his generation: crowd psychology. He revives the windy theories of Le Bon and Tarde, adding interpretations from Freud, to maintain that mass psychology holds at least one of the keys to an understanding of how it is that certain political leaders have been able to accumulate so much power. He also adds that he himself rejects crowd psychology's view of history while being challenged by its subject-matter.

As Moscovici acknowledges, our contemporaries declare these theories unacceptable. They are diffuse and untestable. Social scientists have been much more attracted to the theory of collective action pioneered by Mancur Olson, which derives from economics. According to this, people learn to attain their ends by making rational use of available means. A man who recognizes that some association, like a trade union, works in his interest may nevertheless refrain from joining it so long as he can take a free ride at others' expense. This offers a convincing explanation of why, in many situations, collective actions fail or never get started. It is less impressive as an explanation of successful mass actions and it, too, is difficult to test.

## Gleams in the gloom

Dennis O'Keeffe

JOHN O'NEILL  
*Five Bodies: The human shape of modern society*  
181pp. Cornell University Press. \$17.50.  
08014 17279

John O'Neill holds that the managerial culture of "advanced capitalism" manipulates and degrades people. Business corporations manufacture consumer "needs" and the Welfare State depoliticizes the citizenry. Our human crisis is at once spiritual and bodily. Humans cease to be the subjects of politics, medicine and technology; instead they become their objects, suitable for Huxleyan embryo-to-tomb management and spare-part surgery. Copernicus, Galileo and Newton, O'Neill argues in *Five Bodies*, exacted a high price when they displaced mankind's previous anthropomorphic cosmology, with Bacon and Locke, by way of philosophical accompaniment, reducing the body to its five senses. The author believes that anthropomorphism (human awareness rooted in the physical body) cannot successfully be rejected; it is existentially necessary. An awareness of the physical self as the first datum of experience was the creative force in cultural evolution. The body was, as Vico observed, "the universal principle of etymology"; it is the source of words.

The fascinating first half of the book owes a lot to Durkheim. Our ancestors, it is argued, took the whole world for a body. They were constrained to "think the whole world with their bodies". Indeed anthropomorphizing the world in terms of male and female bodies and the family was a greater conceptual leap than any we have since taken, one without which rationalism itself, which has tragically tipped us out of the equation, could not have occurred. Anthropomorphic thought, however, ubiquitously continued until the Renaissance. Philosophy, theology, law and poetry drew endlessly on the body and its metaphors: the mystical body of the church and the body politic are notions central to our intellectual history. But there remain gleams of hope in the bodiless dark. Two centuries ago Blake tried to

According to Moscovici, crowd psychology rejects any assumption that politics are based on interest and reason. It denies that men join parties and vote for candidates in a search for the greatest personal advantage. Against his critics Moscovici deploys a weak argument and a strong one. The theory of collective action has found most support in the United States and Great Britain, but most mass psychologists apparently consider that their theories do not apply to these two countries, where democracy has been able to find its true form. The peoples of other societies and other ages are different. A likely story!

The strong argument is one from experience. The theory of collective action has precious little to say about the power exercised by Mussolini, Hitler, Mao, Stalin, Tito, Nehru and Castro. Mass movements focus on ideals and develop shared sentiment. They change the priorities people place upon ends like national unity. Economics can treat a desire for national unity only as it treats a preference for a brand of toothpaste; it cannot account for tastes and can cast only a pale light upon changes in preferences. The claims of theories are therefore deflated by the evidence of mass movements. To respond, as so many have done, by distinguishing between rational and non-rational conduct, and asserting that the two require different modes of explanation, is to turn aside before a crucial challenge.

Moscovici is no more willing to tackle this problem, but his is the opposite timidity of ignoring the means – and relationship in collective behaviour. Many of those who attended Nazi rallies, for example, must have been influenced by some calculation as to the degree of participation which would best serve their interests. Though *The Age of the Crowd* spreads over four hundred pages – written, too, with a brilliance which is keenly conveyed by the

translator – no room is found for any view of the control that the mass can exercise over a reluctant participant. Moscovici denies that who disparage crowd psychology without having studied it, but he himself (despite his bearing upon his theses of the theory of collective action).

Thus Moscovici discerns a "paradoxical" when the masses call for a Caesar, paradox allegedly arises because we understand the language of the hero, not the language of the head, so that crowd psychology, according to Moscovici, that individuals making up a crowd are intelligent and creative than when they alone. He does not see that people's inclination to take freedom as an explanation of their willingness to close shop or for some other form of which will oblige everyone to contribute her share. This, certainly, is not a sound intelligence, while many of the "mobs" in European and North American history have, in recent years, been shown to be oriented to specific goals to a far greater extent than any reader of Le Bon, or Moscovici would guess.

As Moscovici concludes, crowd psychology has illuminated problems of mass power of leaders and for the disquieted generation feels about that power. Theories which in nineteenth-century Europe propagated mass politics are now being capitulated in Latin America, Africa and in yet more testing forms. If Europeans come to terms with the new masses they will have to study their psychology should be with the proviso that there are principles of collective behaviour additional those expounded in *The Age of the Crowd*.

## A Winter's Tale

A dying winter light  
sharpens our hearing,  
late warblers on the other bank  
jabber and jab  
at the low skimming midges:

Keats noted here,  
The wind travelled upstream  
and vanished, hours back.  
All the bluster gone out of it,  
the hushed land

gathers its browns and purples  
in clumps  
wickerwork tangles.  
Across the slimy path  
to the kingfisher's nesting place

the dogwood planted last year  
has taken hold,  
dug in, as though  
the tangles were harbed with  
this river not

an English river, we  
not coming up the tame bank  
with the stop  
and start of our toddler  
picking up stones.

That was the war  
that choked the water meadow  
took off the hands  
and scattered mud  
in ephemeral channels

there, where those haggard saplings  
are sucking the soil dry  
We read our history  
in the melting horizon  
and our uncertain future.

LACHLAN MACKINNON

## Controlling the controllers

Mark Bonham Carter

ROBERT REINER

*The Politics of the Police*  
258pp. Wheatsheaf. Paperback, £6.95.  
074500924

JOHN BAXTER AND LAURENCE KOFFMAN  
*Police: The constitution and the community*  
274pp. Professional Books. £17.95  
(paperback, £9.95).

ROGER GEARY  
*Policing Industrial Disputes, 1893-1985*  
171pp. Cambridge University Press. £19.50.  
0521 30315X  
SARAH SPENCER  
*Called to Account: The case for police accountability in England and Wales*  
146pp. National Council for Civil Liberties, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA. Paperback, £3.95.  
0946088 128

All the authors of or contributors to this clutch of books would agree that relations between the British police and substantial sections of the public are in a state of crisis. That is why the books have been written. One is concerned with policing industrial disputes over the past hundred years, a second with how the present state of affairs developed together with some suggestions as to how it might be improved, the third is a collection of essays from a "libertarian" angle and the fourth makes the case for the police being more directly accountable to local authorities.

When I was a child, the most respected public servants were postmen and policemen. Postmen were friendly visitors calling regularly several times a day. Policemen were comforting presences on the way to and from school. "If you want to know the time ask a policeman" was more than a saying, it was a piece of advice. Policemen were authoritative, respectful, perhaps deferential. My policemen were the face of law and order, seen through the eyes of a privileged child. But to draw from such selective memories the conclusion that British society has a tradition of orderliness would be to ignore our history and literature. The establishment of the police by Sir Robert Peel was in response to the disorder, and fear of growing disorder, which accompanied the industrial revolution. Supported by the middle classes it was none the less opposed by the landed gentry, libertarians and the working classes. Those advocates of law and order who call in aid a mythical past need to be reminded that when PC Cullery was stabbed to death in fighting between the police and the National Political Union, the nineteenth-century jury returned a verdict of justifiable homicide. Rioting has been a long-standing and almost uninterrupted tradition in Britain.

The crisis with which these books are concerned, however, is a real one that has developed over the past twenty-five years. The changed attitude towards the police on the part of the public is most marked among those under thirty, and above all among blacks and Asians, but it is by no means confined to these groups. There is not much difference in the accounts of these developments in each of the books under review, though the most balanced is that in Robert Reiner's admirable *The Politics of the Police*. If the apex of the police's popularity with the public was in the 1950s, the decline since then has been steady. No one supposes that their task has not become more difficult and more dangerous – there has been a sharp increase in crime, as well as in political disorder, whether in demonstrations against Vietnam or by CND or the National Front, and in football hooliganism and industrial disputes. These trends might have reinforced the public's respect for the body that protects it, but the image of the police was damaged by the corruption scandals of the 1960s, which revealed what Reiner calls a "systematic, institutionalised and widespread network of corruption" which re-emerged – despite the efforts of the then Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Robert Mark – in the 1970s, involving the Drug Squad and the Obscene Publications Squad. Among other issues raised by the National Council of Civil Liberties (known in police jargon as the National Council for the Prevention of Policemen doing their Duty)

have been the violation of legal procedures in the course of investigations, the modification of the strategy of minimal force by Special Patrol Groups and Police Support Units, the increased and sometimes fatal use of firearms, and finally the 1979 general election which saw the police, who until 1887 were not allowed to vote, participating in a partisan fashion in the election. Launching an unprecedented campaign for law and order, the Secretary of the Police Federation said "we are extremely anxious to make it a big election issue". The Police Federation have much to answer for.

The events, however, which have quite rightly prompted the most acute anxiety and controversy have been the riots in our inner cities where there is a concentration of ethnic minorities – in Bristol, Southall, Brixton, Toxteth, Handsworth, Tottenham and Brixton again. Everyone must deplore and condemn these outbreaks of extreme violence in which a policeman was killed, many others were injured and the property of innocent people was wantonly destroyed and looted. But to deplore and condemn is not enough, and to ascribe these events to a conspiracy of professional agitators seems implausible. The inner areas of London cannot be compared with Ulster, and the immediate call for plastic bullets and more weaponry may serve to escalate violence and increase casualties. The more measured response in Lord Scarman's report (1981) seems more appropriate and constructive. Recent remarks by the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, may be interpreted as a return to that position. It is clear from the history of riots in England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (and in the United States) that they occur in conditions of economic deprivation and political frustration. They are in many cases a cry from the powerless. It is noticeable that in the US, as the black population has been more fully incorporated within the political system and as the number of black mayors and others elected to office has increased, so the riots have largely disappeared. Since the black and Asian population of Great Britain is proportionately much smaller, and since there are few, if any, wards with black or Asian majorities, this process will be more difficult to achieve. But the incorporation of the British working classes within the political system in the nineteenth century certainly had a similar effect.

Police relations with minority groups in Britain are a crucial element in the chemistry of the riots. In 1983 the Policy Studies Institute Report *Police and People in London* said that "the level of racial prejudice in the Force is cause for serious concern" and that "the proportion of young West Indian males who have come into conflict with the police is perhaps dangerously high, and the proportion of their contacts with the police that are negative is very high indeed (over 70%, compared with 14% for the general population)". Already in 1981 the Home Office had undertaken a survey of racial attacks. The result was to show that racial victimization of Asians was fifty times that for white people, and the rate for West Indians or Africans thirty-six times that for white people. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that the Home Office Survey and the PSI Report both show a frightening lack of confidence among these groups in the will or capacity of the police to protect them.

Though I have never heard them mention racialist attacks, it is none the less the assumption of the law-and-order lobby that the prime function of the police is the prevention of crime. With the increase in crime and the drop in the "clear-up" rate from 50 per cent pre-war to 37 per cent in 1983, there was a call for an increase in police powers which was put to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure. A number of these measures were subsequently embodied in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984). The balance held by that Act between the powers of the public and the rights of the individual is a matter of acute and complex controversy, but some of the arguments put to the Royal Commission to support increased powers for the police seem shaky, and the consequences rightly arouse concern.

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act is thoroughly if polemically handled in a number of contributions to John Baxter and Laurence Koffman's *Police: The constitution and the community*. The idea that augmented powers

will increase the clear-up rate is hardly borne out by the statistics: nor is the theory that the courts are exploited by subtle professional criminals. The vast majority of criminal cases that are cleared up depend on evidence provided to the police by the general public, often the victims, not by a Sherlock Holmes masquerading as Lestrade. Nor does it appear that the courts are biased against the police. Eighty per cent of Crown Court and 90 per cent of Magistrates' Court trials result in conviction and "the weight of the evidence does not suggest any greater likelihood of professional criminals than 'small fry' being acquitted. Even the Royal Commission's research concluded that "there are no obvious powers which the police might be given that would greatly enhance their effectiveness in the detection of crime". Why, in these circumstances, was the maximum detention period extended to ninety-six hours, whereas in Scotland under the Scottish Criminal Justice Act (1981), it is six hours? This is made all the more dangerous by the omission from the Act of Lord Scarman's amendment, which would have allowed evidence improperly obtained to be excluded. That is not to say that legislation rationalizing police powers was not necessary, and the then Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, was surely correct to say when introducing the Bill that the present state of the law was unclear and contained a number of anomalies. It is a real weakness of the "libertarian" critique of the new Act that it does not face up squarely to this, nor to the fact that the police must have powers strictly defined if they are to perform in a fragmented society such as ours a function which is both essential and infinitely difficult. An example of this weakness appeared in a recent *Guardian* article by Geoffrey Robertson, arguing against the Government's proposal to extend the powers to ban marches. Would he protest as strongly against the wisdom of banning marches by the National Front through, say Brixton, or does that not count as political protest? It is amazing, as Reiner comments, that "the insights of the 'new' radical criminology drop by the wayside when it comes to consider police wrongdoing".

The view of the law-and-order lobby that the prime task of the police is the fight against crime is opposed by those who see that in the beginning their task was, and remains, the maintenance of social order. Hence the importance of Roger Geary's book on policing industrial relations, with its account of how the tactics employed to deal with industrial unrest have changed from 1893 until today: "abooting by the army gave way to batoning by the police". The interwar period was notable for a decline in industrial disorder. Each pattern of confrontation tended to be less violent than its predecessor, until the 1980s, "when a reversion to an earlier and more violent pattern has taken place". No greater contrast can be found of the change that has taken place than that between Reginald Maudling's response in 1972 to the closing of the Salford Coke depot by pickets, and the present government's response to the recent miners' strike. Maudling

believed that by using sufficient force, it would have been possible to have cleared the gates. He refrained on the grounds of the social consequences of such action. That decision, right or wrong, shows that in an appropriate political climate the Home Secretary can be responsive to a local community. It raises none the less the last major question, that of accountability.

The present position is a muddle where it is difficult if not impossible to assign responsibility. It is best described in the National Council for Civil Liberties' publication *Called to Account*, which argues the case for making the police responsible to local authorities. Under the 1964 Police Act, each force is placed under the control of the local Police Authority; the Home Secretary's influence on policing policy is far greater than that of the local authorities, owing to his financial and veto powers. Tripartite Control is as confusing as the Holy Trinity, and if the recent Police and Criminal Evidence Bill felt bound, as it did, to rationalize the confusions and anomalies of the 1964 Act, one of its first objectives should have been to turn its attention to this matter. Sarah Spencer, the author of *Called to Account*, produces compelling arguments in favour of changing the present situation in which the bulk of the existing local authorities fail to exercise the powers they possess, the Home Office normally supports the Chief Constable, and the judiciary to whom the police appeal ("we are accountable to the law") refuse to instruct either the police or the prosecution on the "way in which evidence to be used at a trial is obtained by them" (Diplock, 1979). So to whom, the NCCL not unreasonably asks, are the police accountable? No one knows. And were the Chief Constables more sensitive to the vulnerability of their position instead of lobbying for the status quo, they would argue for a clarification. As they well know, good management demands a clear chain of command and a clear definition of responsibilities. The strength of the NCCL case lies in its analysis, the weakness in its solution. Local authority responsibility is the obvious answer, but would we really want Liverpool police under the command of Derek Hatton? Would the policy of the police towards racial minorities have been more enlightened had it, over the past twenty years, been under the authority of Hamkyn Council? The NCCL fail to take account of the central problem, the tyranny of the majority.

The right questions are being put, all there are others touched on in these books (all of which turn to the old question "Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?"): data protection, complaints procedures, the introduction of independent prosecutors, and so on. The control and conduct of the police is a crucial question in a democratic society, and one that police themselves should welcome. A proper solution, which has most certainly not yet been found, would reinforce, not diminish, their authority. The comfortable face of the law, authoritative and respectful, has to be reinstated – and if deferential, deferential to the community it serves.

## THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY Theory and Interpretation

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# Heirs of the revolution

Nicholas Mansergh

TARIQ ALI

*The Nehrus and the Gandhis: An Indian dynasty*  
301pp. Chatto and Windus.  
£10.95 (paperback, Picador, £2.50).  
0701139528

B.R. NANDA

*The Nehrus: Motilal and Jawaharlal*  
358pp. Oxford University Press. Paperback, £7.50.

0195616551

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU  
*Glimpses of World History*  
922pp. Oxford University Press. paperback, £7.95.  
0195613236

In the closing months of 1964, the resilience of the Indian political system impressed the sceptics and confounded the critics. Against a backdrop of regional disorders - continuing dissidence in Assam, horror-blindings by police in Bihar, confrontation with militant Sikh separatists in the Punjab - on October 31 Mrs Gandhi was assassinated by members of her Sikh bodyguard. It was a crime that not only threatened the stability of the state, but once again conjured up the nightmare of the multiple fragmentation of the subcontinent which had haunted Jawaharlal Nehru at the time of transfer. Yet despite initial irresolution in dealing with anti-Sikh rioting in Delhi and elsewhere, the authority of government was soon reasserted, and, contrary to widespread foreboding, stability restored. In the Indian context of the time this was a considerable achievement. How was it effected?

The answer lay in the continuity - or failing that, in the appearance of continuity - of government. News of the assassination was delayed for four hours. But within forty minutes of the public announcement, so Tariq Ali records in his *The Nehrus and the Gandhis*, Rajiv Gandhi was sworn in as Prime Minister. That it was Mrs Gandhi who contrived the familial succession was not in doubt. She had made her dispositions against an eventual succession as her own assassination and they were given effect. In a subtle but effective way, without indicating written sources - his book has neither footnotes nor index - Mr Ali describes the workings of the Indian political system at the highest level, which ensured that this was so. From his account three factors emerge, in ascending order of importance. The first was the lack of a credible alternative to a Congress administration, given that few could contemplate with equanimity the prospect of another Janata government; the second, Mrs Gandhi's dominance of a party herself (in the author's words) of any coherent ideology, and of a government in which she had established a monopoly of power and patronage; and the third, that while she had advanced her two sons successively as her heir, it was her controversial younger son, Sanjay, killed in a flying accident in 1980, who had been her first choice. As a result, Rajiv had not been groomed for succession for long and it was in the nature of an unenvied mercy that he had the resolution and capacity to ride out a political storm.

But while all three factors in one way or another influenced the sequence of events they do not either singly or collectively suffice to explain what happened. For that a further, longer-term factor has to be taken into account. It is the reputation of a family, the Nehrus of Allahabad, three generations of whom had played out their roles in an all-India setting, all at some time or another as Presidents of the Congress, two also as Prime Ministers of the Republic. The Nehrus, already the outstanding political family in India, acquired with Rajiv's accession to office a dynastic appearance. In the General Election campaign that ensued in December 1984, the massive popular endorsement accorded to the succession found expression in the near-dynastic phraseology of press and people describing Rajiv as "the inevitable successor", "the one possible choice", "the heir".

Tariq Ali's book, which has twenty-two pages of family photographs, sets out to explain the interplay of personalities and politics that culminated in the emergence of this dynastic phenomenon. The treatment is politico-

biographical, with the focus on the many contributions by individual members of the family to the politics and thinking of their time. The outcome is a lively but selective survey of Indian politics as seen by successive generations of political leaders, reflecting the ideological or conceptual framework by which their attitudes were conditioned. Ali's cast consists not only of Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira, Sanjay and Rajiv Gandhi. He includes in it Mahatma Gandhi, not belonging to the family of the Nehrus of Allahabad, for the marginally sufficient reason that he cannot well be left out. And he also includes Feroze Gandhi, Indira's husband, best known outside India for not being a relation of the Mahatma's, but in India remembered as a radical member of the Lok Sabha whose unconventional ways were little suited to life in Teen Murti House, the Prime Minister's residence, where his wife acted as hostess for her father. Of Feroze, Indira is said to have remarked, "I do not like him, but I love him".

The book is divided into three parts, the first concentrating on Jawaharlal Nehru as Founding Father, the second on Indira Gandhi, and the third on the brothers Gandhi, Sanjay and Rajiv. While very much at home in contemporary political analysis, the author appears at once less interested and indifferently grounded in historical matters. Thus, while he rightly emphasizes that Curzon's partition of Bengal aroused Indian nationalism as never before, he goes on to write of Curzon's having been dismissed because of the partition by the new Liberal government. But in fact Curzon had resigned because of a dispute with Kitchener, four months before the Liberals took office. It was in the turmoil which followed the partition that the seed of political contention in the Nehru family was sown. Motilal stood fast by Gokhale and the Congress Moderates, while Jawaharlal, a schoolboy of seventeen at Harrow, made his father feel slightly sick by writing a letter urging whole-hearted backing for Tilak and the Extremists. Understandably, Ali has little of substance to add to B. R. Nanda's finely perceptive account in *The Nehrus: Motilal and Jawaharlal* (reviewed in the TLS, November 23, 1962, and now available in paperback) of the course of the debate between father and son, which climaxed in Motilal, out of love for his son, taking the great decision of his life in transferring his allegiance to Gandhi. Perhaps he underplays the impact of Motilal's sacrificial gestures such as the disposal of his second cuisine, the burning of his Western clothes and furnishings, and his wearing of homespun *khadi*, in the making of the family image. But then, despite his devotion to the cause and even his imprisonment for civil disobedience, Motilal was not and never could have been a revolutionary at heart. He had a cause: it was dominion status "as full as any dominion enjoys". In 1929, as outgoing President of Congress, Motilal banded over office to his son and successor, who entertained the more ambitious aim of complete independence, remarking, "What the father is unable to accomplish the son achieves". Here the note of familial succession is on record for the first time. In retrospect, however, it may seem more significant than it was. As Ali does well to remind us, Gandhi had furthered Jawaharlal's election, not with any dynastic consideration in mind, but in order to keep a gift, but potential deviationist revolutionary wholly committed to the Congress.

At this juncture Tariq Ali's perspective widens and his interest becomes more deeply engaged. The reason is that Mahatma Gandhi now moves to the centre of the stage. The author dissects some of the differences that arose between Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru about how the national revolution should be directed. He is critical of Gandhi, noting *inter alia* that he appealed to the British "immensely" because he was not interested in any real socio-economic alternative to the Raj. Indeed, he was hostile to socialism in any form and for him "right from the beginning, a negotiated settlement for British withdrawal was the only possible exit route". This is a debatable assertion, especially in the light of the 1942 Quit India campaign. All contrasts Gandhi's attitudes with Nehru's socialist revolutionary instincts, his readiness to take an uncompromising stand, and his fear that by collaboration on small things "we are losing the high position we

have built up" and that "We are sinking to the level of ordinary politicians". Against such a levelling down, Jawaharlal fought all his life.

On Rajiv's accession to prime ministerial office, the question was raised whether any form of family succession had been foreseen in 1947. The answer is in the negative. Had Jawaharlal for any reason withdrawn, his successor would assuredly have been his principal colleague and rival, the formidable Vallabhbhai Patel. Nehru himself was hostile to thoughts of "hereditary governance". He was emphatic in his rejection of suggestions that his daughter, Indira, should be appointed to ministerial



Jawaharlal and Indira Nehru; the photograph is reproduced from Tariq Ali's *The Nehrus and the Gandhis* reviewed on this page.

office while he was Prime Minister, and in respect of all public amenity or service he acted on the view that Caesar's daughter should be above suspicion. He was scrupulous almost to a fault in his respect for parliament and careful to observe the niceties of parliamentary procedure. The author records his impressions, which conform very nearly with my own, of the differences between Nehru's and Mrs Gandhi's handling of the Lok Sabha, with the former relaxed at question time, welcoming the opportunity to inform and generally conciliatory, while the latter to her early days of office was apt to be tense - which was understandable since she was then a member of the Rajya Sabha - and in later years, when she had come to enjoy power and to dominate the Lok Sabha, less forthcoming and more authoritarian than her father. Yet while Jawaharlal was averse to the carving out of a dynastic role for his family, he delighted in his daughter's advance in 1959 to the Presidency of the Congress as something achieved on merit. But there was an element of illusion here. Nehru's style of leadership, far from being inconsistent with dynasticism, in some aspects promoted it. Speaking of himself and his colleagues, he said, "I am more than Prime Minister. We are the heirs of the Indian revolution and the mantle of its greatness hangs about our shoulders." His leadership was, apparently, effortless. He was a man of extraordinary gifts: what a *tour de force*, for example, is his epistolary *Glimpses of World History*, with its abundance of comments on historical events, some of telling in-

## Journey without maps

N. J. Allen

C. VON FÜRER-HAEMENDORF  
*Tribal Populations and Cultures of the Indian Subcontinent*  
182pp. Londen: Brill, Gld64.  
9004071202

This work consists of concise portraits of thirty-one groups, selected to illustrate the diversity of tribal peoples of the subcontinent. For no less than eighteen of them the author draws exclusively on his own field research, which goes back to 1936. However, such heavy reliance on the accidents of biography is not necessarily an advantage; the intellectual justification for the selection is obscure. The Sherpas of Nepal are straightforwardly Buddhist, which would normally disqualify them as tribals, while the Bhils, one of the largest groups classified as tribal by the Indian government, receive only fleeting mention. If room

could be found for the totally indigenous Pathans, why omit the much more tribal, historically more interesting, Khatris of Hindu Kush? Why ignore the well-known Todas?

As the book (regrettably) neglects to move on from the hunter-gatherer standard evolutionary categories, capital and low issues of conceptualization and methodology are ignored. Is the notion of tribalism? Have successive generations of ethnographers done more than accumulate since J. H. Hutton (*Flora* 1920) or Crooke (1890a)? What have tribal studies contributed, what could they contribute? The historiography of the subcontinent? The or trust both ask and answer for himself. Little assistance from a narrow and dated bibliography and inadequate knowledge of the Indian situation. The book needed a volume on tribes, and the author of unrivalled expertise in the opportunity has been missed.

and all with the flavour of his own five mind - written in jail for his instruction. Of his eloquence one may think that this matched so well the events which occasioned it that it became of them. Who can think of the midday on August 14/15, 1947, except in terms of "keeping" of "a tryst with destiny", of Gandhi's assassination without "The light has gone out of our lives and darkness reigns everywhere"?

Tariq Ali, who conveys his own feelings of a left-wing socialist breakaway group Party and that the Indian people would have fared better had India travelled China road, none the less concedes that judged rightly in thinking that parliamentarianism was a preordained consequence of constitutional progression through which independence was gained. Within the unitary system and committed to it, Nehru remained the leader of so much party as of a movement. This had a dynastic sequel. So had Nehru's against communalism, which he equated with a secular state he never wavered was for him a guiding principle, though who is not averse to *épater la bourgeoisie* that he might have done more to religion, the continued strength of which describes as the most telling indictment of century. Of Nehru's and Mrs Gandhi's occupation with foreign policy on the other hand is somewhat more disparaging. Without access to inside information it is hard to but while, for example, one suspects that criticism of Nehru's China policy (or his will stand, Mrs Gandhi's cautious moves in the aftermath of the Afghan may come to be regarded as well-judged chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement in March 1983 and her role as hostess in Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Delhi in November that year may be accorded more positive merit than Ali suggests. There seems little doubt, however, that overall the standing of both father and son as figures on the world stage has enhanced their reputation and through the standing of the Nehru-Gandhi family dynasty. Dynasties are ill-fitted affairs and ill-fitted context - in this case, that of the ties and party leadership. On Tariq Ali's analysis, the birth of dynasticism in India is dated from Rajiv Gandhi's accession to Ministerial office, and to be attributed to the long-established all-India dominance of the Nehru-Gandhi family and, negatively, the decline of ideological conviction on the part of the dominant Congress Party. In a real sense may be different. The popular continuity and stability is said to explain the popular appeal of the Nehru-Gandhi family. But there is another factor. Dynasticism is intelligible, and because it is understood, as Walter Bagehot's monarchy, its appeal is strong.

## Mixed economies

Alec Nove

JAN ADAM

*Employment and Wage Policies in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary since 1950*  
251pp. Macmillan. £25.

0333353285

IVAN T. BEREND AND GYORGY RANKI  
*The Hungarian Economy in the Twentieth Century*  
316pp. Croom Helm. £25.  
0709922094

In his *Employment and Wage Policies in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary since 1950* Jan Adam raises the question of the relevance of Marx's view, that in the early stages of socialism pay should not be equal, but should be "in accordance with work". In practice, that is too vague to serve as a guideline as to differentials between the skilled and the unskilled, between workers by hand and those by brain. In fact, what we have in Eastern European countries is a mixture of government policy and labour-market pressures. For ideological reasons, it is customary to deny the very existence of the labour market, but the workers are free to change their jobs, and the pressures of the market are certainly one factor to explain the changes in differentials. For instance the mass-production of engineers in the post-war years, together with the relative scarcity of manual labourers, had surely contributed to the change in their relative rates of pay.

The author has long specialized in labour

and wages in Eastern Europe, and his book has the considerable merit of looking at three countries on a comparative basis. He lays stress on the military aspect of the economic strategy adopted during the early 1950s. Priority for heavy industry went with the allocation of scarce capital to ambitious new investment projects, with labour used lavishly (with little regard to costs) in older plants, in non-priority industries, and in auxiliary processes of all kinds. One positive effect, however, was the elimination of unemployment. The aim of maximizing the growth of physical output, greatly stressed in the early years of centralized planning, has by now been modified and greater emphasis is placed on profitability. Market-type reforms have been adopted in Hungary and more recently also in Poland, but loss-making enterprises continue to be subsidized, and the trend is still one of insisting upon the full utilization of existing productive capacity even when this is plainly not profitable. Thus full employment is maintained - essential, as Adam points out, in the régime's search for legitimacy.

Indeed, Adam calls one of his chapters "Causes of Over-Employment and Labour Shortage". Among these are labour hoarding (and so its under-utilization) by managers anxious to keep a reserve in the event of plan changes and to cope with peak demand; the continued use of obsolete production techniques and out-of-date equipment; poor organization and so on. So even with extremely high female participation rates there are usually more vacancies than workers. The under-utilization of the existing labour force is partly

due to a reluctance to work hard ("they pretend to pay us a living wage, and we pretend to work", to use a common saying). It has proved remarkably difficult, even at times when hard-liners were in power, to combat unpunctuality, slackness and absenteeism. Adam has a striking phrase: "In the real socialist system the position of managers depends on the goodwill of workers to a much greater extent than in private enterprises."

Since 1956 a steady rise in real incomes to maintain social and political stability has been a priority in all three countries. Adam shows how policies designed to enhance incentives through greater wage differentials collided with strong social and ideological pressures towards levelling. In the three countries there has been a marked tendency for manual workers to gain relative to white-collar employees and intellectuals. Adam cites statistics to the effect that in Poland in the period 1937-60, real incomes of manual workers rose by 75 per cent while those of non-manual workers declined by 26 per cent. Thus graduate engineers not infrequently earn less than skilled workers.

Adam presents a clear account of wage regulation in the three countries (and of its collapse in Poland in 1980). In his conclusion, he rightly notes that the commitment to full employment and the pressures to restrict income differentials constitute obstacles to the implementation of economic reforms of the market type. Altogether, this book provides a useful corrective to the view that, in a one-party state with no free trade unions, control over labour and wages is a simple matter. It most certainly is not.

In *The Hungarian Economy in the Twentieth Century*, Ivan T. Berend and György Ranki relate the stages by which the Communist régime under Matyas Rakosi eliminated private enterprise and imposed centralized planning of the Soviet type. A huge investment programme, with priority for heavy industry, produced a high rate of growth; but the recovery in living standards was halted and then reversed and forcible collectivization affected

agriculture adversely. By 1950-51 already over-ambitious plans were being amended ever upwards. It is interesting to note that the architect of economic policy at this time, Ernő Gerő, was later to explain that "we had information that we had to count on a forthcoming war in three or four years". Some vivid pages are devoted to the waste and inefficiency associated with centralized planning, and to the futile attempts to correct the worst of the distortions in the immediate aftermath of Stalin's death. Rakosi's attempt to reimpose centralized planning led to the uprising of 1956. After its suppression by Soviet tanks, Kadar began the task of rebuilding on a new basis. Although Rakosi and his closest associates had fallen from power, hard-line opponents of any form of liberalization were still around, and an economic reform plan prepared as early as 1957 was rejected as "revisionist".

The Kadar régime reintroduced collective farming (which had largely disintegrated by 1956), but on a new basis: without compulsory delivery quotas, and using "even the most well-to-do elements (kulaks)" to run the collectives. So the market became dominant in agriculture. It took some years of frustration and experiment before the New Economic Mechanism finally took shape, and it was introduced in January 1968. While it did indeed "radically modify" the command system and secured important gains, a "political counter-attack" led to a partial retreat in 1972-3. The advance was resumed, only to encounter externally generated shocks: after 1973, terms of trade moved very strongly against Hungary, and the efforts to shield the economy from the consequences of world-wide inflation led to a big rise in indebtedness and a series of interventions (especially in prices) inconsistent with the logic of the New Economic Mechanism. Berend and Ranki have a dramatic story to tell, and they do so with clarity and insight. There are also many valuable statistical tables, though one would wish for some downward correction of the official volume index.

Rudolf Peierls

## Bird of Passage Recollections of a Physicist



Here is the intensely personal and often humorous autobiography of one of the most distinguished theoretical physicists of his generation, Sir Rudolf Peierls. Born in Germany in 1907, Peierls was indeed a "bird of passage" whose career of fifty-five years took him to leading centers of physics - including Munich, Leipzig, Zurich, Copenhagen, Cambridge, Manchester, Oxford and J. Robert Oppenheimer's Los Alamos. Peierls was a major participant in the revolutionary development of quantum mechanics in the 1920s and 1930s, working with some of the pioneers and, as he puts it, "some of the great characters" in this field.

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# Between belief and unbelief

Peter Hainsworth

ANNE STEVENSON  
The Fiction-Makers  
64pp. Oxford University Press. £3.95.  
0192119729

Personal emotion and experience have come to play an increasingly explicit part in Anne Stevenson's poetry. Much of *The Fiction-Makers* is concerned with pain and loss, though it is neither a gloomy book nor a self-indulgent one. She has said recently that she follows David Jones in believing in "a work-aesthetic in which an artist commits himself (herself) to craft almost at the expense of self". In her poems this commitment means writing clearly, even coolly, in a purification of contemporary dialect and in structures which put the harmony of parts before self-expression. She is, as she says of Jane Austen ("Re-reading Jane") a "voluntary of order, sense, clear art / and irresolvable fun". But that is her baseline: at its best her work has an imaginative intensity and lucidity which seem to lift it into another dimension.

Not that writing poems may be any more innocent or redemptive than making any other fiction. The title-poem is a half-ironic, ballad-like survey of vain attempts by Pound and later poets to bring poetry up to date, to make it new. The last stanza opens into a frightening image of people's absence from the lives they appear to be living:

Here is a table with glasses,  
ribbed cages tipped back,

or turned on a hinge to each other  
to talk, to talk,  
mouths that are drinking or smiling  
or quoting some book,  
or laughing out laughter as candlesticks  
lick at the dark -  
so bright in this fiction  
forever becoming its end,  
we think we are laughing now,  
but we are laughing then.

If that is so, then it is all very well to clean up poetry, if not renew it, to find in it "wordlife running from mind to mind / through the washed rooms of the simple senses" ("Making Poetry"). But there will always be a gap between the fiction and reality, or what seems to be reality. Not surprisingly an awareness of that gap means that it is hard for their maker to submit with total confidence to the fictions that she can bring into being.

There is perhaps only one poem in which the fiction-making is patent and yet untroubled. This is the wonderful "Where the animals go", in which the dead animals, butchered by natural and human cruelty, are imagined rising into heaven:

God absorbs them neatly in his green teeming  
cells.

There, sexed as here, they're without hurt or fear.  
Heaven is honeycombed with their arrivals and ent-  
tles.

Two of each Butterfly. Two of each Beetle.  
A great Cowless sways on her full uddered way.  
All kinds of Cat watch over the live like churches.  
Their pricked ears, pinnacles. Their gold eyes, win-  
dows.

Usually there are more complications. Fictions may out the phenomenal world entirely

("In the Tunnel of Summers") or merge disconcertingly with each other and with normality. "The Blue Pool", apparently based on a painting by Augustus John, but having something of Hockney's colouring, is the most extensive and unnerving exercise in this vein. In it a girl moves between a book, the pool-side and her image in the painting without really existing in any more than a reflection, or the poem allowing us to resolve the question for her. But of course not all fictions are equal. More and more it is the supreme fiction of Christianity which has come to assert itself in Anne Stevenson's work. Significantly the opening poem is not the bleak "Fiction-Makers" but the more religious "From an Unfinished Poem", which draws central features of the Christian story into the fiction-making process itself:

In the event  
the story is foretold,  
foremade in the code of its happening.

In the event  
the event is sacrificed  
to a fiction of its having happened . . .

That sort of peaceable, if mystic, abstraction is not a programme for the collection any more than it is one for belief. Instead, in some of the strongest poems, the issue assumes the more familiar form of a clash between belief and unbelief. It is confronted most directly and perhaps most touchingly in "Dreaming of the Dead", written in memory of Anne Pennington, but it is in "The Television and the Nightingale" that it is most powerfully worked out. The poem is about watching a news-report

from Lebanon and then an actress in an opera, when there is no interrupted by someone else to say that a nightingale has just been heard outside:

Love, you have brought your nightingale  
Bribes will not better this case, wrong, wrong, wrong  
She hates you. I hate you. Why are you you  
(When I know it's the story that's spoiling your  
I'm hating her and fighting me, fighting a woman  
hereof of nightingale, lost to its saving voice.

So faith - or fiction - can just drop away. "Willow Song" (for Frances Howard, whom the whole collection is dedicated to) can provide only the consolation of form. Flower imagery, a recurring refrain, ellipse of any direct reference to death, to give the poem the air of a lament, personal and impersonal at the time. But though the artistry is admirable, probably too prominent. It is in those where the thought and feeling are more direct that the best results occur.

Most of these are in the first and second section of the book. In the later parts the artistry is undiminished, but the poems are more local and less ambitious. One group ("Grate Poems") centres on the former village in County Durham where Anne Stevenson now lives. She writes of life with the kind of sympathetic romanticism other people who live in her Eden might wish to question:

all but the saved (success  
Has spared them, and the angel of death  
The town is inhabited by an alien, washed up  
("Forgotten of the Foot")

Then there is "A Legacy", the last and most poignant poem in the book, an exercise in the mode of Villon, with humorous and satirical elements, which, after the manner of its author, makes bequests to friends, family and fellow poets. It is approachable, well made, though through its pastiche, self-revealing, though in a good many of these later poems, factors to have the edge over fiction, pragmatism and imaginative power.

But discontinuity and unevenness are perhaps unavoidable. Anna Stevenson's writing does not aim at unity in anything but the individual eraface. One of her strengths is her refusal of spurious systems. To a poet, she means recognizing the force of other things apart from making fictions, and facing the cult incoherence that must result.

## Head-clearing

Sean O'Brien

ALASDAIR PATERNON  
The Floating World: Selected poems 1972-1982  
59pp. Pig Press, 7 Cross View Terrace,  
Neville's Terrace, Durham, DH1 4UY.  
090399786X

It's good to have Alasdair Paterson's poems, very much in the way of plot and incident nor a strong sense of place (which, when named, is usually Scotland), his stories lean heavily for impact on their protagonists. Shrewdly, he has made a number of these outsiders or losers, giving them as personalities the head start of oddity. Madness or mental impairment is a common theme. Three stories ("The Full Moon", "Norman and the Man" and "From the Diary of Billy Bible") are set in the therapy ward of an asylum; in "A Breakdown", a mechanized monotony erodes a factory worker's sanity; "The Sky" concerns his alienated narrator's weekly session with his psychiatrist; in "Hiss", a man is dogged by a faint noise no one else can hear. Unfortunately, in these stories, the protagonists are portrayed with a damaging lack of conviction; they may walk and talk, but they rarely live, carry little emotional charge.

Of the "madness stories", the most impressive is "Norman and the Man", which dwells on the mutually frustrating communication gap between a doctor and his brain-damaged patient. McCabe's other outsiders include a lonely would-be poet who has never found his own voice ("Autumn") and a malodorous world-painter who works in the subterranean kitchen of a hamburger restaurant ("Jingle"). The former story is marred by the

## Gut feelings

David Sexton

JOHN FULLER  
The Adventures of Speedfall  
160pp. Edinburgh: Salamander. £9.95.  
0907340716

To an impartial observer it may rather admit of question whether scholarship necessarily entails passing large quantities of rich food and fermented liquor through the gut. So the bilious John Carey said in "Down with Dons". John Fuller has a better appetite: in his world it is their stomachs that don't most study. Like Barbara Cartland, he believes that we are what we eat. Or he half-believes it, enjoying the taste of such literal materialism. Carnibalism and Holy Communion alike fascinate him; he wonders if they are not the same.

In his novella, *Flying to Nowhere*, he gave phantasmagoric expression to this queasiness. It is set in a monastery on a Welsh island in the Middle Ages - college cloisters returned to source. Stylistically the book is all early Auden - very Oxford too. The Abbot is researching his body and soul, seeking by dissection to distinguish the savour of life from the savour of death; at the end of the fable he achieves a strange apotheosis as the dead rise in rampant viscosity.

That book was written in a true poet's prose, rich and, well, fermented, thoroughly inventive in its locale. *The Adventures of Speedfall* is less adventurous. These six stories have a straightforward Oxford setting, and they are loosely constructed around the doings of one John Speedfall, as related by another. Speedfall is described as "indisputably one of the original Young Fogies", "the most creatively obtuse, the most intrepidly clumsy, the most determinedly interfering of tutors", "the soul of indiscretion", but for all that he hardly ever dies. The chattering narration is perhaps an attempt to create a donnish Watson to his Holmes but it reads more like the Bismarck chapter of *Ulysses*: "My Experience in an Oxford College" by Leopold Bloom.

The stories are concerned with the essence of donishness, and its ingestion. In "Wiggly Fortidge" an election to an Honorary Fellowship hangs on Speedfall's candidate's proving the edibility of a new fast-breeding sea-squid to the Committee. The "luminous slime"

## Loser takes all

David Montrose

BRIAN McCABE  
The Lipsick Circus  
140pp. Edinburgh: Mainstream. £7.95.  
(paperback, £4.95).  
0906391873

Since, as a rule, Brian McCabe offers neither very much in the way of plot and incident nor a strong sense of place (which, when named, is usually Scotland), his stories lean heavily for impact on their protagonists. Shrewdly, he has made a number of these outsiders or losers, giving them as personalities the head start of oddity. Madness or mental impairment is a common theme. Three stories ("The Full Moon", "Norman and the Man" and "From the Diary of Billy Bible") are set in the therapy ward of an asylum; in "A Breakdown", a mechanized monotony erodes a factory worker's sanity; "The Sky" concerns his alienated narrator's weekly session with his psychiatrist; in "Hiss", a man is dogged by a faint noise no one else can hear. Unfortunately, in these stories, the protagonists are portrayed with a damaging lack of conviction; they may walk and talk, but they rarely live, carry little emotional charge.

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## Freedom in flashes

Tim Dooley

JESSIE KESSON  
Where the Apple Ripens  
159pp. Chatto and Windus. £8.95.  
0701139749

This collection of stories by the Scottish writer Jessie Kesson follows three novels, the most recent of which, *Another Time, Another Place*, has been made into a very successful film. The immediacy of her style, with its economical evocation of physical reality, crisp loyalty to local speech and swift transformations of scene, undoubtedly contributed much to the success of the adaptation, and the techniques used in some of these stories - panning out from a close-up on a face to a long shot of a desolate landscape, making use of flashback or close-cutting - often suggest some of the cinema's technical freedoms. The characters in Jessie Kesson's stories, though, find their images of freedom in half-remembered snapshots of poetry, the texts of hymns, folk songs or playground rhymes, compressed language secreting a richness and sensuality with which they can protect themselves against the dour, self-denying spirit of official values in their particular time and place, values represented in "Road of no Return" by the crofter Aunt Teenac: "Searching for 'the English' that could convey the strength of her Gaelic commandment 'You must not . . .'"

Now nearly seventy, Kesson spent part of her childhood in an Aberdeenshire orphanage. Most of the stories in *Where the Apple Ripens* are set in the inter-war years and three are set in institutions - an orphanage, a mental hospital and an old people's home. Other stories focus on the lives of vagrants, outcasts, solitaries. The girl or older woman at the centre of a typical Kesson story combines a need for praise or acceptance with a spirit of independence. The considerable obstacles to pleasure presented by a puritanical society tend to be overcome by triumphs which themselves involve

cruelty or at least revenge. In "Stormy Weather" Christina Forbes's humbling transition from orphan girl to apprentice servant is sweetened when she manages to convince her colleague Bertha that she sees this as a privilege, not a punishment. "The Gowk" portrays a much more vicious cycle of recrimination. A teenage girl is coerced into naming a mentally handicapped boy as the father of her child by a community anxious to rid itself of two scandals at once. When the "gowk" boys taken to the asylum, his father relieves his anger at the injustice by threatening the girl with a sexual assault.

Kesson's heroines find themselves in grim situations, but their inner lives are far from grim. Here pride and vitality of imagination score their quiet victories over circumstance. This is particularly true of Isabel Emalle, the central character in the long title-story. Her last day at school coincides with the funeral of an older girl whose watch she had once envied.

A memory of a memory, maybe. Your mother's watch, locked away in a drawer in the dresser. Signifying the twenty-first year of her life. But isolating it, as if nothing worth confirming had happened to her since. Maybe the important things that happened to folk fell out of time altogether. And flowered into space.

This is the moment of Isabel's flowering or ripening, a time to affirm as well as confirm, which neither the censorious looks of older women nor the clumsy gropings of the local Lothario can tarnish. She survives on what she has made precious to herself - an unlooked-for compliment, a vision of the future, gilt lettering on a school certificate, a fragrant rhyme:

Daisies are  
our silver  
buttercups our  
gold  
this is  
all  
the treasure  
we  
can have  
or hold.

## Defence mechanisms

Savkar Altinel

ANDRÉ BRINK  
The Ambassador  
288pp. Faber. £9.95.  
0571136893

André Brink is a writer whose name is now so firmly linked with the struggle against apartheid that it is at first not easy to understand his decision to greet a new period of crisis in his native South Africa by resurrecting a twenty-year-old novel which does not address itself explicitly to the inequities of the white régime there. This story concerns the South African Ambassador to France and his Third Secretary, to France and his Third Secretary, two ambitious and conservative men leading strictly controlled lives, who both become obsessed with a wild, promiscuous young girl called Nicolette, are drawn by her into the Paris of crumbling apartment blocks, foul-smelling alleys and sleazy nightclubs, and are finally both destroyed when the jealousy of one of them causes him to report the situation to the Gestapo.

Despite the "simplicity" of its subject-matter ("As simple as love and hate", says the Third Secretary), this book is not without political overtones. In his "Author's Note" Brink identifies it as part of a wave of fiction produced by the so-called *Sestigers*, the young South African writers of the 1960s whose work, while not being overtly engaged,

had surprising political side effects, as the questioning of Afrikaner morality and religion contributed towards a breakdown in the stranglehold of the authorities on the minds of the younger generation. As such, this movement paved the way for a later wave of fiction which was to involve itself more with the socio-political scene in South Africa and of which my novel from *Looking on Darkness* onwards formed a part.

But *The Ambassador* is political in a more direct way as well. The events it describes take place in the context of rumours of unrest "back at home", which, together with the "scandalous" conduct of the two diplomats, threaten to

bring to a premature end delicate arms negotiations with the French government; and the connection between the private lives of the protagonists and the policies they are called on to defend in their professional capacity is clearer than Brink seems willing to claim. He keeps the political events sketchy, but it is still obvious that what appears to be only background is in reality very much a part of the action, and the same emotionally maimed ruling élite uses censorship and repression both as psychological defence mechanisms and as instruments of government.

While the novel is interesting in itself and for the light it sheds on its author's later development, what could only be termed Brink's "struggle" with it remains something of a mystery. He states that it was born of his own exposure to Paris as a student in his twenties after a sheltered upbringing in South Africa, and explains that several early drafts preceded the original Afrikaans edition, which he then translated into English and has now re-translated, revising it extensively in the process. The result is an elegantly tidy creation which, with its trinity of somewhat stylized central characters and its economically evoked setting, seems very much the unified product of a powerful initial vision.

As a result, it is not altogether surprising to discover that the differences between his new edition and the first English version (published in Britain under the title *File on a Diplomat*) are numerous but also distinctly minor. Some of the changes boil down to (rather haphazard) copy-editing. On a different level, certain words and expressions have been replaced by new ones, brief scenes and snippets of dialogue added and details changed in an effort to clarify the themes and characters (Nicolette is thus made to say, "So what?" instead of "I don't care," and "Shit" instead of "Oh dear") the better to indicate her rebellious nature). The alterations, however, do not add substantially to the novel and one suspects that their main function will be to provide additional material for thesis-writers.



## American notes

### Christopher Hitchens

If any city in America has had a poor press, that city is Pittsburgh. It occupies a place, in the world of the stand-up comic and the tired gag-writer, that is analogous to Wigan. This is fair only in that, like Wigan, it is becoming an industrial museum. Up-river is the giant graveyard where the fortunes of Carnegie, Frick and Mellon were made; fortunes now commemorated mainly in galleries, grants and endowments. Homestead Mill, where Leon Wolff and Kurt Vonnegut have set historical and fictional descriptions of the great robber baron and labour wars, is a meadow tourist attraction. Every taxi-driver seems to be a former steelworker. Pittsburgh, for all its space and beauty, is *echt* blue-collar melancholy.

Unlike Wigan, though, it is a place where you can stop anybody and ask for directions to the Cathedral of Learning. It takes a little nerve to frame the question, but it can be done. The Cathedral of Learning is an imposing Gothic tower, forming the centrepiece of the University. One of its many floors recently gave a talk to the English Studies department, on Anglo-American ironies. On another, a few weeks ago, Colin MacCabe delivered his Phi Beta Kappa lecture as Mellon Professor of Literature.

The lecture, entitled "Broken English", will appear as the introduction to a forthcoming number of *Critical Quarterly*. It took the form of a plea to make English studies more multidisciplinary or, perhaps I should better say, it asked for a recognition that some such development had already occurred. In effect MacCabe argued for an enclosure, within English studies, of those developments in cinema and television that are affecting language and discourse in any case.

Nothing particularly controversial there, but Pittsburgh will become one of the first American universities where graduate studies in English will attempt to comprehend such a field. Those who lampoon American degree courses

have been pointing out wittingly that majors in TV-watching, and even in cine-camera maintenance, are available already at certain magic campuses. In his lecture, MacCabe cautioned the promiscuous. "If we are to teach our students to read," he said, "then we must also teach them to write. If they would analyse, they must also produce." Whether or not this will appease the fears of the anti-deconstructionists, or of those who fear a wave of Joycean and semiotic terrorism, remains to be seen.

Presumably the cinematic ingredient of the courses will include some acknowledgement of the work of Preston Sturges, whose *Five Screenplays* have just been published by the University of California. *Sullivan's Travels*, most enduring of this quintet, features a director who wants to make the great social realist picture of all time (provisionally entitled *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*). Sullivan's superiors are free with cold water, and warn him of the slump in demand for proletarian film. One such movie, they tell him, bombed in Pittsburgh. "What do they know in Pittsburgh?" says Sullivan. "They know what they like" replies the producer, provoking the nipsa. "If they knew what they liked, they wouldn't live in Pittsburgh." Another *idea fixe* for MacCabe to surmount.

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The controversy over Joan Peters's book *From Time Immemorial* has intensified rather than ebated as a result of the refusal of its many endorsers to admit that they might have been conned. (Briefly - see "American notes" for May 10, 1985, and "Letters", *passim* - Miss Peters attempted to show that there never really had been any rooted, indigenous Palestinians. She was ringingly supported by Barbara Tuchman, Saul Bellow, Theodore White and most major newspapers and magazines, until critical work by Norman Finkelstein, Edward Said and Albert Hourani accused her, in effect, of fabrication.)

On the evening of December 15, at a public PEN reading given by John Updike and Woody Allen, an extra page was added to the programme notes by persons unknown. The insert denounced *From Time Immemorial*, attacked Harper and Row (a PEN sponsor) for publishing it and criticized PEN members Bellow, White and Tuchman for endorsing it. Norman Mailer, as chairman of the evening, disclaimed all knowledge of this act of guerrilla theatre.

At least two of the publications attacked in the leaflet are in the process of making amends. The *New York Times*, after many hesitations and delays, has published an article on the affair. The article quotes Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, Professor of Religion at Dartmouth College and Vice-president of the World Jewish Congress, as saying of Miss Peters, "I think that she's cooked the statistics. The scholarship is phony and tendentious. I do not believe that she has read the Arabic sources that she quotes." Meanwhile, the *New York Review of Books*, which has been a wallflower in the debate for the best part of a year, has just published a long article by the Israeli demographer Yehoshua Porath, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Porath has already said elsewhere that he thinks *From Time Immemorial* to be "a sheer forgery" and "sheer rubbish except maybe as a propaganda weapon".

Miss Peters modestly declined to be interviewed by the *New York Times* as she has declined to comment on any of the questions levelled at her book. But it will be interesting to see if her eminent plumb-writer now take the opportunity to reconsider.

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A taiting consequence of the McCarthy period is the penumbra of discredit and revelation which still surrounds all attempts at political investigation. The American academy, for example, may have to fear many things (being passed over for the grant or the trip, being made an embarrassingly generous offer to do Star Wars research, being excluded from the television special on his pet subject) but he need hardly fear the indignity of a loyalty test or a tribunal of orthodoxy.

It has long been the view of a certain segment of opinion that this advertisement for the American way is too generously worded. As one critic puts it:

In the ten years from, let us say, the middle 60s to the middle 70s, American colleges and universities, in full view and full consciousness, sloughed off the burden of their proper authority and responsibility as educators of the young and proclaimed themselves instead to be no more than mirrors of surrounding cultural fashion. If you want something of us, they said in effect - to students, to movements for the liberation of this and that, even to the wealthy and powerful of foreign lands - bring pressure or bring money; you will find us most wonderfully compliant.

The critic is Midge Docter, director of the Committee for the Free World and editor of its monthly, *Contentions*. Her scathing remarks occur as part of a larger article, in which she discusses the latest attempt to "roll back" liberalism and permissiveness on the nation's campuses.

In the past few months, numerous individuals have been contacted by an organization calling itself "Accuracy in Academia". This organization proposes to send "volunteer" monitors into 110 institutions of higher learning, there to watch diligently for "liberal bias" and to report it, when detected, to the authorities and to a nationally distributed newsletter. Ms Docter and her Committee have not generally concerned themselves with threats to freedom from the Right. Indeed, the worst thing they can find to say of "Accuracy in Academia" is that it reminds them of student yahooism during the 1960s. But their conclusion is relatively unambiguous:

While we stand second to none in our concern about the condition of the American university, we wish that the organisers of AIA would bethink themselves

and shut down the operation before it goes further. This and other expressions of conservative disdain, will probably limit the appeal of AIA to the poorly disguised cranks and blackguards who started it. I have a slight caveat to register even so. The editor of *Contentions* calls AIA that "decency and honor cannot be expelled. They can only be lashed." No doubt. But does that unguarded admission mean that "decency and honor" are the only things being overhauled?

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Friends of decency, if such there be, do have long to wait. On January 27's new affairs programme, with a potential audience of 27.3 million, will challenge the night goppy of ABC, CBS and NBC. CBN, at Christian Broadcasting Network, will come what it believes to be the amorally and unliberalism of the major networks. Spurred on by its managing director, John Wholan (a former editor of the *London Moon's Washington Times*), CBN promises itself objective and, oddly when you think about it, value-free. "We're not going to convert anybody," he says, "but we are to say that we, in our labours, will bring a system of values. That system of values is the word of God as conveyed to us in scriptures." Make up your mind.

We already know more or less what it will be like, because its owner, the Rev. Robertson, already has a show called *The Club*, and has dispatched a news crew to Macaulay's Row Chantry Pigg was about that. The electronic Elmer Gantry objective because they believe anything

## The periodicals, 34: 2 PLUS 2

### Stephen Romer

2PLUS2: A collection of International Writing. Distributed by Cecilia Boggis Associates, 11 Ashburnham Road, Bedford MK40 1DX. £13.288.172.0005

The hefty fourth issue of 2PLUS2, an "annual collection of international writing", stretches to 455 pages, and represents some seventy-two poets, dramatists, essayists and translators of extremely diverse climes and tongues. Founded by Jon Carlon three years ago, it is edited from Lausanne and has contributing editors in America, Australia and elsewhere. With what must be considerable funds at their disposal, the editors have not only commissioned new work from the known and the less-known, but followed their enterprise through with an international publicity campaign that few literary journals of this kind can match. This number begins with a generous and distinguished selection of poetry and prose by the Czech poet Jaroslav Seifert. In an afterword, describing his meeting with Seifert, the editor-in-chief of 2PLUS2, James Gill, defines the task of his magazine as broadening the "opportunities for a universal literary discourse". The phrase is unfortunate, since it brings to mind a bland, literary Esperanto made up of words that are somehow delectated and neutralized by the time they go into print in Switzerland. Such a notion would be mistaken; however, since at its best 2PLUS2 does succeed in introducing a genuinely international spirit.

The selection from Seifert himself, made up of strikingly tender poetry and wry prose reminiscences, could serve as an example of what this magazine does best and usefully assists in the dissemination of a fine writer who, despite his Nobel honour last year, remains little read in the West. The bilingual presentation, the generally excellent translation by Ewald Osers, make this initiative a valuable one. And yet one cannot help but share Seifert's own perplexed questions to James Gill: "what are the literary criteria of 2PLUS2, and how does everything fit in?" The answers are by no means clear, and partly because this is so it makes a straight read-through of the journal a choppy experience.

This leads to a more general question: how

should one, indeed how can one, read 2PLUS2 satisfactorily? It is exasperating, for to come across a thoroughly mediocre poem after the concentrated excellence of the Judicious use of the index is one thing, although this would tend to favour the already known: Paul Bowles, Jean Cocteau, Eugenio Montale, Marjorie Perloff, Buzzati, to take a handful at random. In case of the well-known (and often dead) and the very unhelpful. It would have been interesting to know, for instance, what Seifert's laconic article on the Exposition Universelle in Paris first appeared, whether Perloff's blackly humorous story "Floora" was previously published in an earlier collection, and if so when. Paul Bowles' little contribution about Dr. Harper who was partial to a glass of the human blood has about it the quality of *Indel*, but we should have been told. As for rest, it is a tall order to digest with an appetite some sixty or so less-known writers from around the globe. The danger is that, and one formula which I found myself that successfully was the group presentation of several contemporary poets from the same country, with a pertinent introduction. Can Wallace Crabbe perform this service for contemporary Australian poetry, introducing seven leading figures, who are represented in the pages that follow? The quality of the work is high enough, but the least, to stir my curiosity, in particular regard to Vincent Buckley, Kevin Hart and Philip Mead. Similarly successful group presentations - a formula that the editors might well to develop and expand - are by Harjo Lomas of two modern Finnish poets, and Marguerite Dora of five Romanian poets. These groupings are like cases of order to an arduous trek through 400 pages of discussion.

Given the statistics of the collection, the overall quality (if that expression has a meaning) is high, and the physical presentation is excellent. For a British public the price, at £13.28, will seem high, but there is no doubt that the venture is a thoroughly worthwhile one. It is to be curious about an immense diversity of writing. An ordinary reader will be drawn to familiar territory or a group identity and within it new elements, hitherto unexplored

## Letters

### The Brothers Adam

Sir, - I wonder if I could comment on Kerry Downes's recent review (December 13) of new books on Robert and James Adam by Alistair Rowan and Joseph and Anne Rykwert. I feel he might have been a little more enthusiastic about the former and might have drawn attention to two shortcomings of the latter, namely a tendency to make significant factual errors and the biased sample of Adam buildings discussed at any length.

Perhaps I can mention some of the more misleading statements made by the Rykwerts. They imply (p 111) that Moor Park was an Adam house when John Harris has shown (*Apollo*, 1967) it was not. They suggest (p 114) that Capability Brown may have been partly responsible for the appearance of Ugbrooke, when an article by Rowan (*Country Life*, 1967) cited by them includes a copy of Adam's drawing of the facade as built. They write (p 144) of Adam's lodge in Green Park that it "is a rectangular block" and "in it is a dining room below and a drawing room above" as though the lodge still existed, when it was demolished in 1851. They say (p 170) that the village Adam designed for Lowther was not built, when it was (albeit in a modified form) and is included in the list of executed works which they reproduce from Howard Colvin's dictionary of architects. They say (p 177) that Seton suffered in the nineteenth century, yet it is one of the least altered of all Adam buildings. They state (p 177) that Althrey Castle was only partially built as designed, when all that was omitted was a courtyard wall and four one-room lodges. They say (p 192) that only one of the Adam sides to Fitzroy Square in London survives, when the facades of both sides were carefully restored in the 1950s. Again, they say (p 194) that Balbardie was a castle, when it was a classical-style house. My hope that your reviewer would mention some of these points was not fulfilled; instead he made an error himself by saying that the Royal Society of Arts building is the only survivor of the Adams' Adelphi project in London, for other survivors are 1, 2 and 3 Robert Street, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 18 Adam Street and 2, 4 and 6 John Adam Street.

However, your reviewer did point out that the Rykwerts' book is more a work of synthesis than discovery, and if this suffers from a fault common to earlier books on the Adams in that it concentrates very much on their early projects. For example, the Adams built or rebuilt about thirty country houses; the Rykwerts discuss six of the first ten and only two of the last twenty. The Adams extended some twenty more country houses; the Rykwerts discuss six of the first eight and none of the last twelve. And the Adams worked (mainly on interiors) at about twenty more country houses; the Rykwerts discuss four of the first seven and only two of the last thirteen. This concentration on early projects is not too serious as far as interior decoration is concerned, for the Adam style was evolved in their early projects and did not greatly develop thereafter, but it is much more serious as far as their facades are concerned, for these developed fairly continuously and reached their maturity in relatively late classical houses such as Gosford, Welkingshaw and Balbardie and in late tastes such as Seton, Althrey and Mansel; none of these is given more than a passing reference by the Rykwerts. It is true that their introduction suggests they will concentrate on decoration, but the presence of over fifty illustrations of Adam facades makes clear that they are concerned with these too.

It is in this context that Rowan's book is to be welcomed, for here are published drawings and details of many of the Adams' later projects that are ignored elsewhere. The drawings and the informative if tantalizingly short text will be of great help to those seeking to understand the whole range of the brothers' work, and may bring forward the day when a book is written which considers this. Such a book is much needed. In conclusion, may I say that I suspect the main reason that later Adam buildings have been ignored is that they were built north of the border while most architectural historians have always lived to the south.

DAVID N. KING,  
34 Greenhagh Way, Bricco, Dunblane, Perthshire

### 'Shall I Die?'

Sir, - By providing antedatings of words alleged to be Shakespearean in origin, my learned and generous-minded teacher I. A. Shapiro (Letters, December 27) reinforces the precise point of my letter to which he refers, which is that the date at which the OED first records a word such as "scanty" (found in "Shall I die?") is no proof that the word could not have been used before that date.

Professor Shapiro suggests that absence of reference to "Shall I die?" by eminent scholars of the past who had demonstrably examined parts of the manuscript in which it is transcribed shows that these scholars had seriously but silently considered and rejected the scribe's attribution of the poem to Shakespeare. Without attempting to anticipate Gary Taylor's response to reactions to his article, I cannot refrain from remarking that this is mere supposition.

It may be helpful to place the present endeavour in a slightly larger context than it has so far been accorded. Editions of Shakespeare regularly include works - such as "A Lover's Complaint" and parts of *The Passionate Pilgrim* - whose authority has been or is disputed, or which - such as other parts of *The Passionate Pilgrim* - are certainly known to be by named poets other than Shakespeare. On the other hand, almost all of them exclude *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, whose partial ascription to Shakespeare is generally accepted. Gary Taylor's investigation of the claims of "Shall I die?" is part of our effort to rationalize this situation. If the poem were proved not to be by Shakespeare, we should of course exclude it from our forthcoming edition. But if the seventeenth-century ascription is not disproved we shall include it with statements as to its claims, and in the confidence that these claims are, at the very least, higher than those of the poems by Barnfield, Marlowe and Griffin that are regularly, and confusingly, printed in editions of the complete works of William Shakespeare.

STANLEY WELLS,  
The Oxford Shakespeare, 40 Walton Crescent, Oxford.

Sir, - There has been some discussion about the randomness of the word "scanty". In the poem "Shall I die?" Although the OED's first quotation is dated 1660, the word was in use in 1596. Thomas Lodge has the phrase "scantia fare" in the dedication of his *A Margarite of America* of that year.

PHILIP EDWARDS,  
Department of English Literature, University of Liverpool.

Sir, - Peter Beal (Letters, January 3) says that the ascriptions in MS Rawl poet 160 to some minor poets "may or may not be" correct. I can verify that the ascription to "William Austen" (Austin) is correct, as I found when editing his poems (1983), though the version is defective.

ANNE RIDLER,  
14 Stanley Road, Oxford.

Sir, - So, now we have the words - what about the music?

We can sympathize with the literary critic who dismissed Gary Taylor's discovery when the poem was "read to him by a journalist over the phone" (our italics). Roma Gill found the lines very difficult to speak at sight; but Graham Matthews, having noted the words, found them surprisingly easy to sing.

The nine stanzas lend themselves to a simple, non-melismatic, melodic treatment, easy to memorize and project. A trained musician could readily extemporize a suitable melody, singing with or without accompaniment. Such a song would be ideal for the first scene of *Twelfth Night* (c.600), a play which is full of popular songs - such as "O Mistress Mine" (whose music is published in Thomas Morley's *First Book of Consort Lessons* in 1599) and "Hey Robin", whose music could be by William Cornhill (died 1523) and whose words are those of Sir Thomas Wyatt (as Peter Beal remarks in his letter of January 3: "some of the songs in Shakespeare's plays were not written by him"). "Shall I die?" would provide the right "food of love" for Orsino: each stanza could accommodate at least one "dying fall". And if the contemporary audience already

knew how long the poem was, they would probably share the impatience of Orsino when he cries "Enough, no more!"

Of course Robin Robbins is right when he observes that "some ugly ducklings grow up into ugly ducks". But perhaps this is a lyrebird?

ROMA GILL,  
13 Lindeed Court, Endcliffe Vele Road, Sheffield.  
GRAHAM MATTHEWS,  
The Cathedral, Sheffield.

### 'Monuments and Maidens'

Sir, - The young woman pointing to the Capitol in the painting reproduced with Mary Lefkowitz's review (December 20) of *Monuments and Maidens* is described by her as "a portrait of Temperance". The attributes of Temperance are usually a pair of pitchers, or sometimes a bit and brida. On the other hand, the five-pointed star that "Temperance" is wearing on her brow appears often on the American flag as a symbol of the states of the union, as well as on Uncle Sam's top and Lady Liberty's Phrygian cap in many nineteenth-century cartoons and medals. The figure's state of disarray - her "slipped chiton" and loose hair - characteristically denotes the zeal and independence of Liberty (as I described in a chapter of the book Mary Lefkowitz was reading). I don't know the painting at first hand, and can't research it from here, but I guess it shows either American Freedom pointing to the seat of power, or, alternatively, a state perhaps newly represented on the Capitol. If so, Mary Lefkowitz's great-grandfather need not have worried a bit about having a drink after he saw the painting. Mary Lefkowitz would have me leave much to the imagination; she has either been unhelpfully fanciful, or she has accepted the label on a painting in a hotel foyer.

She is keen that I should take other matters "at face value", most particularly Tiresias' report that women enjoy sex ten times more than men. (Well done, Tiresias, for having such fun; poor show, Warner, for not being a sport about it.) Does Mary Lefkowitz mean that Tiresias - or for that matter, any mythological character - can be our instructor in this? That must mean she believes he really did turn into a woman, and that, furthermore, we still have his story from the horse's mouth. The possibilities of such an approach to myth are truly wondrous: think of Zeus' metamorphoses, taken "at face value", think of all those pleasures he took and said he gave.

If we are not to inquire of myths what made people tell them in that way, we will indeed have to give birth to a new past. Besides, I wasn't concerned with the substance of Tiresias' comment, but with his role as a witness to sexual difference, the easy authority over female experience that his myth assumes, and the need for women to give their own accounts.

But then Mary Lefkowitz does not pay much attention to what I wrote. It would be weary work to go over her misreading, but above all I would not want TLS readers to think I am of the opinion that "Americans, of course, are notoriously inarticulate". The wordless roar that greeted the Statue of Liberty as the ferry approached rose from the lips of citizens who, I made clear, were smaller than the lady's nose. At about four feet tall, they could not be expected to hold her with a sonnet.

MARINA WARNER,  
10 Dunculle Place, London NW5.

### Mainwaring and Oldmixon

Sir, - Pat Rogers's interesting letter (December 20) would appear to differ at least in emphasis from the account of Frank H. Ellis in *Swift vs. Mainwaring*, p 147, who concludes that of the thirty-three *Medleys* included in his volume "Mainwaring wrote seven, Oldmixon eleven, collaborated with Oldmixon on eleven, with Steals on one, and Oldmixon wrote four". This was the account I was reporting, not the DNB's. If, on the matter of attribution, or of degrees of responsibility, there is an issue of Oldmixon vs Mainwaring, it ought to be aired substantively and in detail.

CLAUDE RAWSON,  
80 Malpas Lane, Keston, Leicestershire.

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## COMMENTARY

## Muffed stunts

T. J. Binyon

King Solomon's Mines  
Classic Cinema, Haymarket

Even those most inured to the wilful eccentricity of film-makers will be profoundly shocked, three-quarters of the way through this new version of *King Solomon's Mines*, when Umbopa (Ken Gampu) proclaims himself the rightful chief of the Kukuana. For he does so under the name of Ignosi, as he should, but of Twala, his uncle – the evil, one-eyed, usurping fratricide whose head, severed by a sweeping blow from Sir Henry Curtis's battle-axe, bounds over the ground like a football to land at Ignosi's feet – a scene which the film foolishly ignores. Indeed, it ignores most of the novel, keeping only the motif of a search for a diamond mine, but setting this in what might be 1914 (though anachronisms are so plentiful as to make the date uncertain), turning Allan Quatermain, a small, wiry, dried-up fifty-five-year-old, into a handsome young American hunter with a sawn-off shot-gun (Richard Chamberlain), adding two comic villains, a German colonel (Herbert Lom) and a sadistic Turk (John Rhys-Davies), and rolling Sir Henry Curtis and Captain Good together into the female form of Jesse Husten (Sharon Stone), an archaeologist major from Iowa University. Miss Stone does preserve one or two of Captain Good's characteristics – beautiful white legs, for instance, which become mere and mere visible as her shirts get shorter and shorter. She also shares his sartorial nottiness, emerging from assault, torture, near-rape, aerial dogfights and similar with a shirt as crisp and as clean as when it came from Wardrobe. And when she does get it dirty, after being belted up in a giant casseroles together with a stone or two of assorted vegetables and Allan Quatermain, she immediately finds a kindly native tribe who live upside down in trees to give her free laundry service.

Although the film invokes Rider Haggard's name, it obviously owes far more to Steven Spielberg and Indiana Jones. But, like most epics, it's far weaker than the original, butting its head, ineptly in its dialogue, un-

humorous, and lacking narrative excitement. The only thing that can be said in the film's favour is that it would do frighten even the smallest child, so obviously does it lay bare its own artifice. The back-projections are crudely unconvincing: Richard Chamberlain hangs head-down over a film of a pool of hungry crocodiles, clings to the wing of an anachronistic Tiger Moth standing on the studio floor and fights on the roof of a stationary railway carriage past which an African landscape is travelling. Imaginary mountains are plasticine or rude daubs on a backcloth, while five or six gently ambling elephants – never seen in the same shot as the actors – stand in for a madened, stampeding herd which puts a detachment of the German army to flight.

Chiefly responsible, presumably, for this witless and charmless travesty of one of the greatest of adventure stories are J. Lea Thompson, the film's director, and Gene Quintane and James R. Silke, authors of the screenplay. Should they wake up one morning to find themselves plucked to the bed with an assegai, no more than justice will have been done. Anyone intending to see the film would do far better to stay at home and read the book. Or any book.

The winner of the Whitbread Book of the Year prize for 1985 will be announced on January 28. One book will be chosen from a short-list of five in five different categories: novel (*Hawksmoor* by Peter Ackroyd), first novel (*Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit* by Jeanette Winterson), poetry (*Elegies* by Douglas Dunn), children's novel (*The Nature of the Beast* by Jani Hewkes) and biography (*Hugh Delany* by Ben Pimlott). The judges of the prize, which is new worth £17,500, include Richard Branson, Bryan Forbes, Mary Wameck and Shirley Williams.

The National Book League and the City of London will present a prize for the best travel book on London (excluding guide books) which has been published in the last three years. The judges include Simon Jenkins, Sir David Piper and Janet Street-Porter and the prize will be presented at the London Book Fair in April.

## AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

Fleur Baile's *Selected Poems* was published in 1983.

N. J. Allen is a lecturer in the Social Anthropology of South Asia at the University of Oxford.

Michael Banton's most recent book is *Investigating Robbery*, which was published in 1985.

Geoffrey Best is currently preparing a book on international humanitarian law since 1945.

T. J. Binyon is a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford.

Mark Bonham Carter was Chairman of the Race Relations Board from 1966 to 1970.

Philip Brady is Reader in German at Birkbeck College, London.

Robert Brown's most recent book is *The Nature of Social Laws*, 1984.

Agnes Cardinal's *The Figure of Paradise in the Work of Robert Walser* was published in Stuttgart in 1982.

Tim Dooley's first collection of poems, *The Interrupted Dream*, was published last year.

J. S. La Fontaine is the author of *What is Social Anthropology?* and *Initiation*, which were both published last year.

Dorothy Gaiten's books include *The Beehive*, 1982.

Eva Gillies is a former lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

Peter Godman's *Poets and Empires: Frankish politics and Carolingian poetry* will be published this year.

Peter Hainesworth is a Fellow of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

Christopher Hitchcock is a Washington columnist for the *Nation*.

Matthew Jolly is currently revising several New Guinea genera of plants at the Botany School, Oxford.

Marc Jordan's study of Edna St. Vincent Millay will be published shortly.

William Leach's book *Richard Baxter and the Millennium*, 1979.

Virginia Lawless Smith is the author of *Anton Chekhov and the Lady with the Dog*, 1973.

David Lescumbe is Professor of Medieval History at the University of Sheffield.

Nicholas Mannings is Editor-in-Chief of *The India Office Records for the Transfer of Power*, 1947-1952.

A. J. Milne's books include *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, 1984.

Alec Noy is Emeritus Professor of Economics at the University of Glasgow.

Sean O'Brien's first book of poems, *The Indoor Park*, 1983, won a Somerset Maugham Award in 1984.

Denise O'Reilly is a lecturer in Education at North London Polytechnic.

Richard Overy is the author of *Goering: The "Iron Man"*, 1984.

Simon Rye's poems appeared in Faber's *Poetry International* in 1982.

Pat Rogers is completing a biography of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Stephen Rowe edits the bilingual review *Two Fold*.

David Sexton is working on a study of Nabokov.

Kevin Sharpe has just completed a study of *The Political Literature in the England of Charles I*.

Michael Sherblagh is a lecturer in Film Studies at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

John Sire is the author of *The Yugoslav Economy under Self-management*, 1979.

Anthony Sison's *Hayward's Last British Victory to Rome 1753-1754* was published in 1983.

Jillian Symonds's books include *Critical Observations*, 1981.

William Wallace is Professor of Archaeology of the Roman Provinces at the University of London.

Janet Winterson's novel *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit* was published last year.

Janet Winterson's most recent book *English Society 1580-1620* was published in 1982.

Keith Wright.

## Hunting, fishing, novel-writing

Peter Kemp

The Great Canadian Novel  
Radio 4

There is a ghost story by Rebertsen Davies in which the spectres of defunct Canadian writers – Sara Jeanette Duncan, Ernest Thompson Seton, Robert Barr, Nellie McClung – are sighted in the obscure attacks of a Toronto library, clamouring to be reborn as American so that they will receive attention. Spirited objection to British neglect of things Canadian came from living authors in *The Great Canadian Novel*, Radie 4's tie of programmes about the country's fiction. "It used to be in Britain that to mention Canada was to cause an immediate glazing of the eyes", Margaret Atwood remarked, while Robertson Davies observed that, though thirty-eight European universities were represented at a conference on Canadian studies he had attended recently, no British institution was among them.

*The Great Canadian Novel*, a survey concentrating on seven contemporary authors – Margaret Laurence, Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro, W. O. Mitchell, Rebertsen Davies, Timothy Findley and W. D. Valgardson – set out to show what is being missed. Interviewing these writers and presenting extracts from their works, Margaret Horsfield attempted to trace the contours of present-day Canadian fiction. What hindered her enthusiastic enterprise was its inability to draw connections. Though authors were invariably related to their regional backgrounds – from Munro's southern Ontario to Valgardson's northern Manitoba – literary links tended to be ignored. Typically, while it was stressed that Margaret Laurence and Alice Munro originate from different parts of the country, the striking closeness of many of their fictional concerns – both have produced sequences of linked stories recording a girl's growing up in a rural small-town community and her part-escape from this into academic and literary life in a city – went unremarked.

What made this disconnected approach not just unhelpful but especially inapposite was the fact that – as the extracts kept intimating – modern Canadian writing seems suffused by an acute sense of affinities. Relative and relations (to the past, to immigrant ancestors, to other countries) are particularly prominent in it. Linked to this is another motif discernible in the programmes' fictional extracts: a wide-

spread and long-lasting preoccupation with early experience. Fear of W. O. Mitchell's novels deal with prairie boyhoods; Rebertsen's adolescence in south-west Ontario is also Munro's forte; Margaret Laurence has a similarly keen eye for provincial adolescence. W. D. Valgardson's books hark back to the Icelandic-settler community of his youth.

Startling-points are something contemporary Canadian writers often fix their interest on. Frequently, their characters find it impossible to detach themselves from the ethos of their early years. Robertson Davies's *The Deptford Trilogy*, burgeoning out into cosmopolitan comedy and urbane sequels of baroque oriditism, remains rooted in the provincial as he underlined in one of the programmes, explaining that "the small town has burned itself into his worldly-wise protagonists. Margaret Atwood's fiction likewise keeps you aware of homely origins behind cultivated facades. The central figures in her latest two novels, *Life Before Man* and *Bodily Form*, are sophisticated-seeming women whose bleak, claustrophobic is just a trifle carapace round a core of provincial, puritanical conditioning.

Neither of those books gets a mention in *The Great Canadian Novel* – perhaps because, in Toronto, their Canadian scenes are predominantly urban. A curiosity of these programmes was that – while decrying the fact that Canada has been lumbered with a national image that seems all moose and Mounties, pizles and prairies – they kept falling back on fictional extracts that reinforced this view by describing hunting, fishing and trapping. Concluding with a piece from W. O. Mitchell that plangently harped on the pioneer-and-prairie note ("Where spinning poplars lift their dry leaves and wild sunflowers stare, and Alice Munro's striking closeness of many of their fictional concerns – both have produced sequences of linked stories recording a girl's growing up in a rural small-town community and her part-escape from this into academic and literary life in a city – went unremarked.

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## Back to nature

Mansel Stimpson

Fire Festival  
ICA

*Fire Festival* is Mitsuo Yanagimachi's fourth feature film and the first to have British distribution. Its script is by Kenji Nakagami who won the Akutagawa Prize in 1976 for his novel *Mitsui*. Three years later his earlier book *Year-Old's Plan*. Nakagami comes from Shiga in Wakayama Prefecture and the most striking aspect of *Fire Festival* is its ability to capture the atmosphere and character of a small port in southern Japan. Thanks to Yanagimachi, his photographer Masaki Tamura and his composer, the ubiquitous but remarkable Toru Takemitsu, this is vivid; what is conveyed is not merely the movement of life in the town and the grandeur of its surrounding hills but the very spirit of the region.

Kinya Kikaoji plays Tatsuo, a lumberman who trains dogs for hunting. His hostility to a scheme to buy up land, his own house included, for a marine park has led some admirers to see *Fire Festival* as an ecological statement – and it is true that the unpolluted landscape is contrasted not only with the park plan but with talk of the possibility of a nuclear station being sited in the area. However, Tatsuo's beliefs are ancient and modern. His hostility to change comes from his devotion to the Mountain Goddess, to whom he offers homage

and acts of expiation. It is a creed as primitive as the local rivalry between the sea folk and the mountain folk and as instinctive as the hostility of the townspeople to the outsider Kinya, who bestows her favours liberally, restoring her relationship with Tatsuo, who had been her lover when he was fourteen and she twelve.

A simplicity varying on a multiplicity of these various elements and extends to the camaraderie of the loggers, who treat the pursuit of women much like the hunting of wild boar. Pop songs on a transistor radio are a recurrent and ironic leitmotif, set against the majesty of the scenery. But, although *Fire Festival* can be traced, the various threads never fully here dramatically. Characteristic of this is the fire festival of the title, a male ceremony involving initiation into adulthood and the warding off of evil spirits. One learns more of its significance from production notes than from the film.

The areas in which the film succeeds are not limited to the technical. The story of Tatsuo, which the Mountain Goddess is opposed by the sacrifice and retribution it carries out, the sun's affinity with the forces of the heart of nature is made apparent by a finely judged episode during a storm when he accepts the role demanded by his beliefs. *Fire Festival* does not afford to have fairies which fly across the stage; she has cast the mime artist Jack Klaff as the prince who becomes the beast after attempting to react to the deep-rooted religious of its central character, a religious outlook which, if Christian parallels are sought, would lead viewers not to the era of Christ but to the primeval world of Abraham and Isaac.

## Cursing tales

Victoria Radin

SAM SHEPARD  
A Lie of the Mind  
Promenade Theatre, New York  
Curse of the Starving Class  
Theatre 890, New York  
Fool for Love  
Various cinemas

"It's as if Ernest Hemingway had written and starred in the movie version of *For Whom The Bell Tolls*", claimed a six-page cover story on Sam Shepard in *Newsweek*. The occasion of the piece – and of dozens of others – was the simultaneous openings in December of his new play, *A Lie of the Mind*, and of his own film version, in which he plays the lead, of his play *Fool for Love*. In addition, a rather uneven revival of *Curse of the Starving Class* (1978), possibly Shepard's finest play, was still attracting good audiences five months into a run off-Broadway. Shepard is now the idol of the teenyboppers and, second to Shakespeare, the playwright most frequently produced in the United States, where he is reckoned the natural heir to O'Neill.

Alas, *A Lie of the Mind* is a terrible disappointment. Following the example of *Fool for Love* and his urge to polymathy, Shepard directs it himself and, more crucially, wrote it to be directed by himself. Running at four hours, with live country background music supplied by The Red Clay Ramblers, it seems a kaleidoscopic blur, verging at times on self-parody, of the themes of all his later works. Shepard has said that during rehearsals he allowed the actors to continue to evolve the play, and it is possible that he was rather too eager to listen to them. The work has an unfinished quality, both less poetic and less precise than his other recent works.

At its centre are a couple who are a step advanced in sado-masochism from the pair in *Fool for Love*. Jake (Harvey Keitel) has battered his wife Beth (the twitchy Amanda Plumme) into brain damage; each in flight from the other, they slouch to the separate bedlams of their parents' houses, where the bulk of the play takes place, awkwardly shifting from one side of the stage to the other. Here we are again, after *Buried Child* and *Curse of the Starving Class*, in the badlands of the lower-middle-class Western American family – Shepard's contribution to American drama's obsession with the hearth (the "diaper play" as one critic named it). His cartoon hyperboles of

dynastic disintegration, with their mixture of violence and grotesque humour, put him closer to Charles Addams than to O'Neill, Miller or Tennessee Williams. Jake's father, like the Old Man in *Fool for Love*, is a drunk who walked out on his family and died (his wife is still plotting her revenge and achieves it, in a way, by burning down the family house); Beth's Dad remains at home in a state of terminal disaffection, his shotgun at the ready.

Shepard's persistent theme is how love, or ties, or "lies" go wrong, that men can't live with women – or without them. (Women have the same trouble with men, though that is less important to him.) "Love – that crack of shit", says Jake's mother. "It's another disease – only it makes you feel good while it lasts." There is little evidence in any Shepard work that love ever makes you feel good; love, or this distemper, incurable obsession, a lie of the mind, is a poison, or curse, which is helplessly handed down from one generation to another. In the past, these generations were segregated into different plays. *A Lie of the Mind* brings them together, but says nothing new on a subject Shepard has treated more cogently.

The same synthesizing impulse is at work in his film-script for *Fool for Love*. The Old Man, the father of the incestuous lovers, when the stage was meant to be a fantasy projection, is now, in the uncharismatic performance of Harry Dean Stanton (seen in the Shepard-scripted *Paris, Texas*) integrated into the action, with banal results. More successfully, Shepard inflates the memory-soliloquies of the pair into long flashbacks showing their childhood, with the alluring twist that what we see never quite matches what we hear on the voice-overs. Directed by Robert Altman, it is certainly a more coherent film than *Paris, Texas*, but it lacks the relentless of the original and has a lot of that earlier film's empty mythos – a landscape in search of some characters. It also shows that Shepard, for all his Gary Cooper looks and poise in a saddle, is still not one of nature's actors: gaunt and introverted, he retains a most un-filmmaker-like inwardness – the sort, I imagine, that compels him to write all these cursing tales in the first place.

*Sam Shepard: Seven Plays* (336pp. Faber, Paperback, £4.95, 0 571 13615 X) contains the texts of seven plays written by Shepard between 1974 and 1981, including *Curse of the Starving Class*, *Tooth of Crime*, *Buried Child*, *Sovege/Love and True West*. It has an introduction to the playwright's work by Richard Gilman.

## Thoughtfully ever after

Jeanette Winterson

LOUISE PAGE  
*Beauty and the Beast*  
Old Vic

Fairy tales are valuable pieces of our imagination because they speak to all levels of the personality. Heart and head are not divided in the fairy world. Required to give up our preoccupations with the world as we think we know it, we enter a different realm suspended in time, where magic matters, and our own lives assume a new perspective.

The story of *Beauty and the Beast* is a simple one and Louise Page leaves it uncluttered. There is no attempt to modernize either the characters or the dialogue, and this saves the play from slipping into pantomime, which would inevitably reduce the important tensions between Beauty and her family and Beauty and the Beast. It is these tensions that give the play its power, and keep it true to the genre from which it springs.

This faithfulness is enhanced by the director Jules Wright's welding of tradition and innovation. Not afraid to have fairies which fly across the stage, she has cast the mime artist Jack Klaff as the prince who becomes the beast after attempting to react to the deep-rooted religious of its central character, a religious outlook which, if Christian parallels are sought, would lead viewers not to the era of Christ but to the primeval world of Abraham and Isaac.

mask, reminding us in the best fairy-tale manner what looks like one thing is often another. This is also true of Beauty, whose father has to discover that his daughter has a mind of her own. The quality of resolute innocence that Joely Richardson displayed in *Wuthering* makes her an inspired choice for Beauty, who must be more than beautiful. In fairy tales, innocence is not naivety; it is the opposite of self-consciousness. Heroes and heroines win through because they are not thinking about themselves.

The closing scene brings with it the humour and improbability of the conclusion of a Shakespearean comedy, where everyone suddenly ends up with the right person, on the right throne and peasants and fairies alike are joyful. Within this movement there is a note of discord, always understated to suggest that life, though transformed, still has an inherently unruly aspect. For Page, this comes with Beauty's father, who cannot accept her choice to leave his home. Like *Majvolle*, he is a stranger to the power of love unless it be on his own terms. We cannot pity him (the play does not allow that) but this ending sends the audience home thoughtfully as well as entertained; people don't live happily ever after unless they want to.

*Beauty and the Beast* by Louise Page is published by Methuen in their Women's Playhouse series in association with the Women's Playhouse Trust (44pp. Methuen, Paperback, £2.95, 0 413 55700 6).

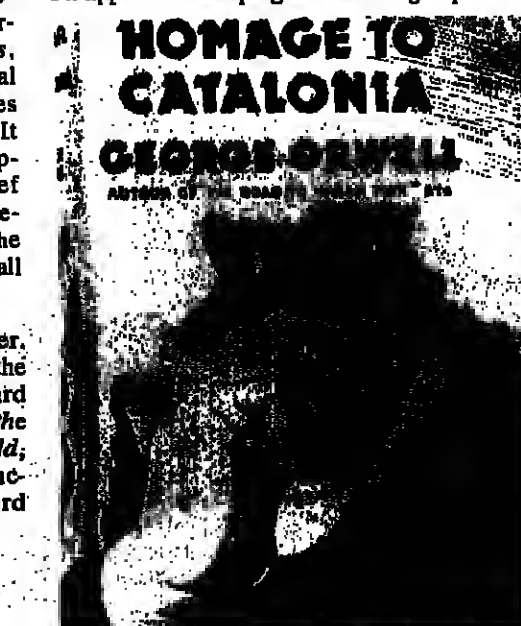
## Unexpected affinities

Marc Jordan

Masterpieces of Reality: French 17th Century  
Painting  
Leicester Museum and Art Gallery, until  
February 2

This is a rather restrictive title for an exhibition which so dramatically and intelligently reveals the rich variety of French painting in the first half of a century too often overshadowed by the normative style of Louis XIV's Versailles. That supremely successful *Gesamtkunstwerk* and the Parisian Academy which trained and supplied its creators were, however, comparative late-comers on the artistic scene. As the Leicester show demonstrates, the French Grand Style was one of the many achievements of a school which was as vigorous among the French colony at Rome and in the provinces as it was in Paris.

Juxtapositions in hanging bring this home in an often startling and invariably thought-provoking way. Among the Romans the pastorate rationality of Poussin's "The Choice of Hercules" finds its natural fell in the romantic and enticing melancholy of Claude's "Landscape with Hagar and the Angel". Unpredictably the feeble, explosive fantasies of Monsi Desiderie from Metz jostle the sombre, withdrawn genre scenes of Georges de La Tour, the great, if controversial, rediscovered provincial from Lorraine. And among the Parisians a self-consciously classifying "Allegory of Peace" by Simon Vouet needs loftily across at "A Quarrel in a Tavern" by the Le Nain brothers; while Philippe de Champaigne's full-length portrait



A first edition of George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, 1938, is to be sold at Sotheby's on January 14. The estimate is £120-£180.

## AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 260

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than January 31. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct – in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration. Entries, marked "Author, Author 260" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priority House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on February 7.

1. It was looking over and beyond everything of the present and far into the past. It was gazing out over the Ocean of Time – over lines of century waves which, further and further receding, closed nearer and nearer together, and blended at last into one unbroken tide, away toward the horizon of remote antiquity. It was thinking of the wars of departed ages; of the empires it had seen created and destroyed; of the nations whose birth it had witnessed, whose progress it had watched, whose annihilation it had noted.

2. As I stood and gazed, it terrified me to feel that she had worn that queen-like smile for nineteen centuries – that she had lain in the darkness of the earth, and still had smiled – that she had seen the slow decay of years grind her fair cheeks and limbs, and yet had smiled – that now she rose so victoriously up when she gazed on shouting worshippers, and

of Cardinal de Richelieu, with its perfect poise and lushly described drapery, finds an unexpected affinity with the luxuriant and formal flower-pieces of his fellow Fleming Jean-Baptiste Menneray.

Remarkably, all the works in this show, which was inspired by the Leicester Museum's purchase in 1983 of de la Tour's "The Cheirbey", are from collections in the British Isles. Very few pictures, except perhaps the two small Claudes from the National Gallery once owned by Sir George Beaumont of nearby Coleorton, will be anything like as familiar as comparable works in French collections. The Stockton-on-Tees de la Tour "The Dice Players", Champaigne's "Annunciation" from Hull, the striking Nottingham Le Brun of Hercules and Diomedes and the choice group of canvases from the Bewes Museum at Barnard Castle make sufficient reason in themselves to explore further these somewhat neglected galleries, while important pictures from Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester and Dulwich stand out afresh in this context.

Not least of the pleasures of this exhibition is to encounter works which challenge our received images of particular artists. A small, simple, tender "Pieta" turns out to be by Charles Le Brun, more readily thought of as the ever-inventive impresario of Versailles. A canvas of Creesus and Solen, its actors in elaborate oriental fancy-dress, might have been painted by a follower of Rembrandt. It is by the protean Claude Vignon. And the touchingly hesitant early Poussin "Virgin and Child", garlanded in spring flowers added by Daniel Seghers, is a far cry from the marmoreal antique solemnity of his mature pictures.

There are relative unknowns here too: Jaan Tassel of Dijen, with his adolescent gypsy madonnas scintillating out of Caravaggesque gloom, deserves to be more widely known; Georges de La Tour's son Etienne, who continued to paint in Lunéville in his father's manner but adding an attractive cool metallic tenacity of his own; Louise Meillon, the only woman painter represented here, and an accomplished mistress of still-life; and most delightful of all, though in a very minor key, Henri Maupérché, a painter of landscape who seems to add the sweet, unreal grace and colouring of Correggio to the classical settings of Claude.

One caveat should be registered, though it is not one that ought to detract from the pleasure and interest of this stimulating exhibition. The exact status of a number of pictures, including the Leicester Museum's own much-damaged Poussin "Holy Family", is still a matter for debate and in some cases may be unresolvable. Christopher Wright's otherwise useful and informative catalogue (which also serves as a check-list of seventeenth-century French paintings in British public collections) does not always make this clear.

remains alone in majesty, unmoved by the adoration of thousands.

3. All this had been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives on only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and used the eyelids and the hands. The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern philosophy has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of life and thought.

Competition No 256  
Winner: J.H.C. Leach  
Answer:

1. And now, lad, all is over  
Twist you, your love and the clover  
So keep a stiff upper lip  
And shrink not, lad, nor shiver  
And talk you down to the river  
And take your final dip.  
Max Beerbaum, *Max in Verse*.

2. When lads have done with labour  
Is Shropshire, we will cry  
"Let's go and kill a neighbour"  
and "other answers" Ayl.  
Humbert Wolfe, *Lampoons*.

3. Oh, no, lad, never touch your cap:  
It is not my half-crown.  
You have it from a better chap  
Than I long ago laid down.  
A.E. Housman, *More Poems XL*.



# Moulding the Grand Manner

Lindsay Stainton

ANTHONY M. CLARK  
Pompeo Batoni: A complete catalogue of his works with an introductory text  
Edited by Edgar Peters Bowron  
416pp. Oxford: Phaidon. £80.  
0714823414

I will venture to prophesy, that two of the last [recent] distinguished Painters of that country, I mean Pompeo Batoni and Raffaele Mengs, however great their names may at present sound in our ears, will soon fall into the ranks of Imperiale, Sebastian Concha, Placido Constanza, Massucco, and the rest of their immediate predecessors, whose names . . . are now fallen into what is little short of total oblivion.

Sir Joshua Reynolds's words from his fourteenth *Discourse*, delivered in the year after Pompeo Batoni's death, were to prove only too accurate. From the 1740s until he died in 1787 this "eme grande" (as Cenova described him) had been the most celebrated painter in Rome, with a European reputation matched only by his rival Mengs. Yet within twenty years or so he had become almost forgotten in Britain—during his lifetime, his most fruitful source of patronage—and apart from a few polite but inconsequential notices in early nineteenth-century biographical dictionaries (evidently lifted wholesale from Italian sources, since his activity as a portrait painter, for which he had been most celebrated in this country, is barely mentioned), the natural cycle of taste gradually relegated him to limbo along with the rest of the Roman *settecento* school. His paintings were too so much despised as taken for granted (rather as Sargent's portraits were taken for granted in the middle years of this century).

In 1932, at about the time when the first stirrings of the taste for Baroque and eighteenth-century painting and decorative art made themselves felt among connoisseur-collectors, the first serious attempt to reassess Batoni's oeuvre and to establish its chronology was made by Ernst Emmerling in his doctoral thesis. However, the real credit for rescuing Batoni from oblivion belongs to the late Anthony Morris Clark (1923-76). One of the most distinguished American scholars and museum directors of his generation, Clark's greatest passion was for eighteenth-century Rome. So much did he identify with his favourite period that he even invented an *alter ego*, "Cardinal Mucciavacca" (an amalgam of Cardinal Albani—with more than a soupçon of Urbank's Cardinal Pirelli—Winckelmann and Clark himself), in whose name he engaged in witty correspondence with other scholars on *settecento* artistic matters. At the time of his sudden death—which occurred, appropriately enough, in Rome—he was working on two books. The first was to have been a history of painting in Rome between 1700 and 1799, the second a monograph on Pompeo Batoni. It is this latter work that has now been edited for publication by Edgar Peters Bowron. Fortunately, Clark left a mass of invaluable notes, a large and scrupulously annotated photographic archive, as well as a carefully assembled reference library.

Bowron, who in 1982 organized the first exhibition devoted to Batoni in Britain, has provided an almost faultless catalogue of works. The notes to each painting are exemplary in their thoroughness (although the gravestones are treated with a minimum), and almost everything is illustrated in the 415 half-tone illustrations (some of which are rather murky) and the sixteen handsome colour plates.

The introduction provides a straightforward account of Batoni's career, emphasizing his role as portrait-painter to the "Grand Tourists". Continental as well as British, Wiley Bowron does not attempt to imitate Clark's lively and idiosyncratic literary style. The absence of any sustained discussion of Batoni's subject-paintings, on which his reputation was originally founded and among which are some of his finest works, makes for a somewhat unbalanced picture, but it would be wrong to criticize this book for failing to be something other than the *catalogue raisonné* that was intended. In order to set Batoni more precisely in the context of the art of his time the reader must consult Clark's other posthumously published work (also admirably edited by Bow-

ron), *Studies in Roman Eighteenth-Century Painting* (1981).

Batoni had an easy familiarity with all the fashionable styles of his period: he adopted a Belegnese-derived late Baroque manner in such devotional pictures as "The Sacred Heart of Jesus"; echoed Van Dyck (for British connoisseurs) in some of his most brilliant portraits; anticipated Greuze's neo-classic appeal to sentiment in "The Personification of 'Purity of Heart'"; and in his historical subject-pictures he rivalled the eustere neo-Peussinesque style of Mengs. One suspects that Mengs would have despised chameleon-like behaviour of this sort as he himself fixed on and stuck to a conceptual and rigidly programmatic approach to painting. As Batoni's early biographer Onofrio Beni wrote, "Batoni fu più pittore che filosofo, il Mengs più filosofo che pittore". And simply as painter and as a manipulator of surface textures (his rendering of silk, velvet and fur is extraordinarily sensuous), and in his refined and beautiful use of colour, Batoni was gifted in a way that Mengs never was.

Of the 265 surviving portraits recorded by Clark and Bowron, 200, or 75 per cent, depict British and Irish sitters, while only about thirty are of Italians, a disproportion which reflects the low esteem in which portraiture seems to have been held in Italy. The extent of his popularity with British patrons, the majority of whom were youthful bachelors making the Grand Tour (he painted few portraits of Englishwomen), is not hard to explain. These portraits are the most spectacular images of young aristocrats to have been painted since the time of Van Dyck. Few of Batoni's contemporaries could match his ability to record an accurate likeness and at the same time to make it vivid and memorable, and to touch it with a grace almost entirely lacking in portraits by his

nivals Mengs and Anton von Maron. A comparison between two portraits of the same sitter, Lord Brudenell, by Batoni and Mengs (both of which are included in the current *Treasure Houses of Britain* exhibition in Washington) makes this point eloquently:



Pompeo Batoni's self-portrait (1773-4), reproduced from the book reviewed here.

Mengs shows a stolid, slightly lugubrious youth, while Batoni, in one of his undoubted masterpieces, endows his sitter with a flattering aura of sensibility. Batoni's particular talent, indispensable for a fashionable portrait-painter, lay in producing discreetly flattering images of his clients as they saw themselves, dashing young men, as sleek and elegant—and sometimes apparently as hairless—as the adoring dogs that so often accompany them.

The Grand Tour portrait in which the sitter is shown posed in front of some easily identifiable Roman monument or antiquity has its

origins in the late seventeenth century. By the early 1740s artists like Trevisani, Anton David, Mussi and Imperiali had made the type of painting a distinctive souvenir of a visit to Rome, but it is Batoni who deserves the credit for popularizing the genre. On occasion his compositions appear almost ludicrous in modern taste—almost as if a piece of antique statuary has come to life—but to eighteenth-century taste such obvious allusions to classical prototypes were entirely acceptable.

There is a sense in which Batoni emerges as the meuler of the Grand Manner: his portraits are a mirror of the arrogance of his British contemporaries (a characteristic also to be observed in Reynolds's most ambitious portraits). Nowhere is this more apparent than in Batoni's splendid portrait of Colonel the Hon. William Gordon, an overwhelmingly romantic and dazzling personification of Scottish patriotism wearing the kilt almost as if it were a toga. Gordon stands in front of the Colosseum, some conquering Roman here, with a dog mere in his outstretched right hand and on feet resting casually yet authoritatively on a fragment of classical sculpture. Such a pose would surely have applauded Jonathan Richardson's self-congratulatory expression of British self-esteem: "eo nado non debet se acerbis resembles the ancient Greeks and Romans as we. There is a baughty carriage, a elevation of thought, a greatness of taste, a love of liberty, a simplicity and honesty in us, which we inherit from our ancestors, as which belongs to us as Englishmen."

Generally speaking, eighteenth-century art is thought of very much in terms of France. The great merit of this book is that at long last Batoni is revealed as an artist of European stature, who takes his own distinctive place beside Boucher, Fragonard and Greuze.

## Revealing disguises

Pat Rogers

AILEEN RIBEIRO  
The Dress Worn at Masquerades in England, 1730 to 1790, and its Relation to Fancy Dress  
Edited by Fanny Burney  
476pp. Garland. \$100.  
0824059840

A title so cumbersome could only belong to a dissertation, and it invites quibbling. The very term "fancy dress" creates difficulties at the outset, which Aileen Ribeiro does not altogether resolve in her absorbing study. "Fancy dress" is not ordinary eighteenth-century usage. The first occurrence supplied in *OED* is by Fanny Burney in 1770; Ribeiro quotes this example, and another from a magazine in the same year, describing a masquerade at Carlisle House (run by the notorious Mrs Corneley, whose activities may not have been as suspect as Casanova indicates, but are certainly whitewashed by Ribeiro). The term seems to be a fresh coinage, though a few years earlier Horace Walpole, writing up his memoirs of the start of George III's reign, speaks of Lady Sarah Lennox presenting herself before the King in a field near Holland House, in a "fancy dress" (which, incidentally, is also the modern sense of disguise or fancy costume). What Fanny Burney meant was a vaguely theatrical or historical garb, not tied to a particular period or individual.

So the relation between carnival dress and the fanciful or romantic costumes worn by the sitters in eighteenth-century portraits is a tricky one. A cognate expression, which Ribeiro doesn't consider, is "fancy picture": a usage traced back by *OED* no further than 1800, although it appears in Reynolds's *variety Discourse* in 1788. Yet the relevance of the term to the subject is shown by her own material. For instance, Gainsborough's "Girl with Pig" mimics the pose of many a lady portrayed in the dress of Rubens's wife; Reynolds's *Master Corneley* turns out to echo not just Holbein but also the image of Henry VIII in the best-known pattern-book for masquerade dress. This problem of distinguishing between (fanciful) costume and masquerade habits as such is largely confined to women and

children, since men had Van Dyck garb to fall back on, and tended to wear more accurate historical costume with less adaptation to current fashion.

Ribeiro has made two significant contributions to our understanding of the subject. First, she has brought together an immense amount of pictorial evidence, which shows the prevalence of the stock motifs in fashionable dress more clearly than ever before. This applies particularly to the long third chapter, which considers in turn the so-called "dress of Rubens's wife" (actually based on the dress worn by Halcia Fourment in the Rubens portrait); female and then male fashions based on Van Dyck, Lely and Kneller; and children's costumes with a seventeenth-century origin. Second, Ribeiro shows the important role played by pattern books, notably the most comprehensive of those surviving, that is, *A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations both Ancient and Modern* (1757), by Thomas Jefferys. This work proves to be a veritable leechology for the age, and will now be dug out far more frequently by historians of art as well as those of costume. In addition, Ribeiro advances our knowledge of the role played by drapery painters, and in particular shows how crucial a role was played by Joseph van Aken, a Fleming who worked in London during the 1740s and 1750s. His versions of the Rubens dress were important for Hudson and Davis, but also for later artists such as Ramsay and Wright.

Along with Anne Buck, Ribeiro has taken the study of eighteenth-century dress several strides on to recent years. This thesis contains useful sections on particular guises (male Hussars, Indians and Tahitians; female Sultanas and slave-girls; Dinahs and bawmers). But it is weak on historical or ideological context, and its perfunctory opening chapter on the background to the masquerade ought to have been eliminated on any reprinting of the thesis. It has reached me down accounts of the pleasure gardens, some moderately well-digested annals of social events, and a good deal of repetition (some passages appear twice or even three times throughout the dissertation). The very first paragraph gives a hazy survey of the introduction of masquerades to England, omitting the part played by the French ambassador, and accepting Heidegger's self-promoting role

as a "Swiss count" (actually his roots were Bavarian). There is a fatal fondness for unsited historical textbooks; an inexplicable reliance on older editions of major sources (Horace Walpole in the *Tonybee* edition, *Life* Mary Worley Montagu in the *Wharfedale* edition, and so on); and a good deal of inaccuracy in citing names, dates and places of publication. These mistakes ought to have been ironed out when the thesis was examined for a London doctorate in 1977, but since this did not happen, somebody should have vetted the text before the publisher was encouraged to charge a hundred dollars for the typescript in photocopy. It should be noted that the illustrations are numerous and, though not adequate to the purpose.

There is less risk these days that we will regard the whole Georgian age as a prolonged masked ball. Its Blue Boys, its Turkish pashas, its nabobs and Oiahellians, have to take their place in our sense of the period: strange foundlings and shoe-boys, balloonists and engineers, shepherds and midwives. Nevertheless, disguise is also self-revelation, and the "game" in which the Hanoverians chose to dress themselves up is eloquent of their fantasies and phobias. To be Telamachus or a Turkish pasha was a decision based not only on personal considerations, though they obviously played their place. In particular, the licence given to women in a constricting society to free their imaginative play must have come with intoxicating novelty. Their increasing adoption of what Ribeiro calls "romantic dress" testifies to a liberation from the masquerade stereotypes of every word of his diary may be accurate. In the direction of roles that might just be reached after the clothes were packed up and the carnival was over. Harriet Byron in *St. George's Grandison* had to beajoined into an impossible Arcadian princess. ("They would have given me a crook, but I would not submit to that . . . I am not to have a hoop that is not conceivable. They wore no hoops in Arcadia.") At a time they would not even wear hoops in the Mall; but by then the days of *Rancho* were numbered; the masquerades had closed for ever; and a shepherdess who stayed too long the fair night and up seized in her real finery and dispatched to the guillotine in the century which saw an epidemic procession of Mary Sharratt at every costume ball ended by Marie Antoinette.

# Cheating at patience

Julian Symons

THOMAS MALLON  
A Book of Ooe's Own: People and their diaries  
318pp. Picador. Paperback. £3.50.  
0330 291327  
DANIEL AARON (Editor)  
The Inman Diary: A public and private confession  
Two volumes, 1,661pp. Harvard University Press. £33.95.  
0674 454456

"A man who tells lies in his diary would cheat himself at patience." The phrase is meant to suggest the pointlessness of telling lies to oneself, but in fact patience players often cheat, jumping a card as they turn over the pack so that they may reach the red queen that goes on the black king, or even becoming momentarily colour-blind so that two cards of the same colour follow each other. The intention, a player might say if confronted by such deliberate error, is only the desire to make things come out right, and the diary keeper has much the same concern. A diary or journal is a kind of emotional streaking, everything on show, nothing concealed. "I expose myself entire", Montaigne claimed. "Tis a body where, at one view, the veins, muscles and tendons are apparent, every one of them in its proper place; here the effect of a cold; there of the heart beating, very dubsiously."

Yet such exposure should not be equated with literal truth. The diarist or journal keeper addresses always, at least implicitly, an ideal reader. Per this reader he (the masculine pronoun is used to avoid awkward phrasing, although most of the finest diarists have been men) creates a picture which corrects reality in major or minor detail, by omission or inclusion. At its least personal the diary or journal is a document of record, on another level a form of self-expression implying a strong degree of egotism, on a third an attempt to describe a world in which those thoughts and events take place. The *Crossman* diaries are an example of the first kind, one mentioned in Thomas Mallon's engaging survey of all sorts of diaries and journals—like this reviewer Mallon regards the two as practically synonymous. He discusses dozens of very different diaries and glances at many more, so that a brief account of the diary kept by Vojko Micanovic, Tito's man in Moscow during the 1950s, is succeeded by passages from the journal kept by the unemployed busboy who intended to assassinate President Nixon but in the end shot and paralysed George Wallace, and that by a fragment of what Lee Harvey Oswald called the "Historical Diary" he kept in Moscow.

Mallon's book is divided into sections, and all these come under the heading "Apologies", a label rightly stamped also on *Crossman*. In general Mallon is a sophisticated interpreter of his material. He sees the two assassins as dressing up in "tacky rhetorical finery" their occasion to become celebrated, so that Oswald gives a post-dated account of a suicide attempt, and busboy Arthur Bremer laments that Wallace's death would be much of a story, so that "something big to Nam flares up I'll end up at the bottom of the 1st page in America". Perhaps because Micanovic and *Crossman* were respectable and respected, Mallon takes them pretty much at face value. Yet although he calls Tito's ambassador to Moscow "a trusted Virgilian guide through a frosty version of hell", he is naturally and necessarily prescient of a Yugoslav view of events, even though every word of his diary may be accurate. In *Crossman*'s case the aspects of parliamentary life and character presented are evidently partial and self-serving in the transition from tape to page edited by Janet Morgan. Mallon quotes a passage in which *Crossman* says he changed his mind about a Cabinet reshuffle, paid an unexpected visit to 10 Downing Street, found the Prime Minister in "bad bad what was a not-unimportant fact". Because *Crossman* changed his mind, walked across the park and found that Harold Wilson "hadn't left the office yet", Mallon says wondrously, a couple of hours' gears were shifted. But *Crossman* was a steady buffer at the ballroom of his own importance, and without some confirmation the word is not to be taken as literal truth.

*Crossman*'s and Micanovic's diaries are in-

tended as documents of record even though they are not quite that, and probably most diaries are of this class. Somewhere between the recorders and the confessors are these who began to keep a diary and found it a habit difficult to break. Harold Nicolson, questioned by his son Nigel, said keeping his diary became a habit, and that public life never entered his head. He doubt he meant what he said, but his motives were inevitably more complex. A diary, as Nigel Nicolson says, may sustain and reassure, it can take the place of pep pills or be used as an evacuator for despair as many poets alleviate their neuroses in verse. Yet the most interesting diaries are not those written by modestly and cautiously self-regarding figures like Nicolson, nor the diaries composed by what Mallon calls confessors, among whom he includes writers of work that may be partly or wholly fictitious. Examples of these are *A Young Girl's Diary*, much praised by Freud, *My Secret Life* by "Walter" and the pseudonymous *9½ Weeks* by "Elizabeth McNeill". All of these pose problems of authenticity, of a quite different kind from those involved in speculating whether Boswell or Rousseau was always telling the truth. There is, as Mallon says, a suspicion that the mysterious denor of *A Young Girl's Diary* "lazzed it up a bit", and although the American critic Steve Marcus has gone to bat for the authenticity of "Walter", and *9½ Weeks* was praised as a factual masterpiece by some American critics, both seem so obviously fabricated that the burden of factual proof must rest as heavily on their advocates as on those who thought the *Hitler Diaries* genuine. Without such proof "Walter" and "Elizabeth McNeill" must be regarded as no more than pornographic fictioneers, where the true diarist sets out to correct the stigmas of reality.

Discussion of such dubious journal keepers, however, only adds an attractive gloss to Mallon's glimpses of chroniclers and travellers, pilgrims and creators, many of them unfamiliar on this side of the Atlantic. One would like to meet more closely George Templeton Strong, a New Yorker who in the 1830s and after thought his city on the way to becoming the world's finest, and by way of proving it gave an account of its heat, crime, drunkenness and gang warfare at a length far exceeding the diary of "Old Pepsy, my prototype", as Strong called him. To come more nearly up to date, Aram Saroyan's *Last Rites*, about his dying father William, sounds appealing but interesting. We are told that "it is an odd combination of spontaneity and contrivance" and such a combination, variously mixed, characterizes the most fascinating diarists. It fits Boswell, who is often said to have invented James Boswell as well. It fits George Sand, and the Wilde who wrote *De Profundis*, and Pepsy whose "willingness to be a booby" is surely intended, a part of his tricky art. The diarist has in mind the ideal reader already mentioned, yet writes also for himself alone: this is the basic contradiction that few diarists can bring themselves to face.

Arthur Crew Inman, whose diaries, kept for some forty years from the year 1919 onwards, are now published in a greatly abbreviated form still totalling more than 1,600 pages, accepted it fully. He desired posthumous publication as in youth he had loomed for poetic fame, and gave frequent instructions to a conjectural editor, suggesting where probing shears might be used, advising against expurgation of material on moral grounds; stressing that there should be "a thorough reconstruction of paragraphs . . . since I am very conscious of the visual inadvisability of such thick, such long, such unbroken paragraphs as to save paper and space; I generally use". The diaries as we have them, a small fraction of the whole, are fascinating particularly because they show, perhaps more clearly than any others ever published, the tendency of diarists to create a private world even when writing about the public one. Less unusual, but still remarkable, is the intensity of Inman's egotism, the importance he attached to every detail of his life. *The Life and Opinions of Arthur Inman*, even to this greatly abbreviated form, might have been intolerably tedious, but they have been shaped by his editor Daniel Aaron into what is effectively a work of art. The first section, "Arthur Remembers", in which Aaron excerpts material from many later re-collected diaries of childhood and youth scattered

through the whole length of the diary, is a model of tactful editorial reconstruction. Throughout the book the editorial comments and linking passages are well chosen, informative, and—most remarkable of all in view of Inman's opinions and behaviour—consistently sympathetic. It is the greatest possible tribute to Aaron that when, near the end, he refers to Inman as "this flawed and sad creature, so gifted and so spoiled", we accept his assessment as the right one.

Inman was born in Atlanta in 1895, into a family whose wealth was based on cotton. An only child, he seems to have been treated with indulgence, alternating with occasional strictness, during childhood and youth. By his own account his father had wanted a girl, and thought of adopting one, although nothing came of it. At local Southern schools and later during five unhappy years at Haverford School in Pennsylvania, Arthur was bullied because of his small size, but fought back and survived. At the age of twenty-one, having passed from Haverford School to the more congenial Haverford College, he collapsed. The collapse had been preceded, according to Arthur, by various preliminary warnings. He had strained his heart while climbing a mountain, had chinned himself too often so that "something ripped in my chest", his collar-bone had "flipped in and out at such a rate that I had to give up golf". It is perhaps significant that all of these troubles came while he was engaged in energetic and manly pursuits. He was removed from college, and received treatment at the family summer place in Maine and in Boston, all in vain. "Thirty-four eminent doctors" looked on him, and most of them pronounced his problems to be not physical but mental. They included gastric troubles, blurred vision, migraines, sprains, colds, and a curiously elastic pelvis that was always slipping out of place. Arthur rejected the doctors as shams or cheats and turned to osteopaths, in particular to the rumbustious back-slapping former big-game hunter Dr Pike, who had powerful hands and was also a "peerless psychologist".

In 1919 Arthur moved into Garrison Hall, an apartment hotel in Boston's Back Bay, where he lived for the rest of his life. Given a comfortable allowance by the bewildered but sympathetic father whom he detested, he acquired a manservant, a chauffeur, and in 1923 a wife. Evelyn Yates Inman is called by Aaron the heroine of the diary, although in truth it has only her. Evelyn had her own apartment in Garrison Hall and their marriage lasted, with many quarrels and some temporary separations, until Arthur shot himself in 1963. Evelyn is the chief female character in the diary, but there are many others. They are the "talkers" who responded to Arthur's advertisements in the *Boston Evening Transcript* for "Persons who have had interesting experiences . . . to talk to an invalid". The fee offered was at first \$1 an evening, later increased to an hourly rate. The responses that interested Arthur most were from young women. Lying in a darkened room, sometimes for twenty hours a day—although on other days he would go out, drive a car, ride a horse—he would listen to tales of their emotional and sexual experiences. Sometimes they would lie on the bed with him and indulge in petting. Occasionally, but not often, intercourse would take place. During one of his rare copulatory sessions he observed: "I thought the darn thing would never end. It hurt my back", and he explained to a woman who "gave me the complete freedom of her body" that "my side had incapacitated me sexually for the last three months". All this conduct was known to Evelyn, who knew too of Arthur's eagerness to spy on naked women, and would sometimes call him to look at such scenes as a man and his wife seen across the courtyard naked in their bathroom. "I waited no time. I looked through a crack in the curtain. I related the show."

Arthur, then, was a sexual super-creep. Add to this super-creepiness the facts that he was in favour of lynching negroes, who raped white women, admired Hitler for many things but in particular for his persecution of the Jews, detested Irish Americans almost as much as Jewish Americans, called Roosevelt "Rooseie the Rat", and went while he heard of Senator Joe McCarthy's death, and it may be wondered how Daniel Aaron can possibly have used those friendly phrases. Yet there is no doubt

that Inman had, even at his worst moments, a curious naive charm, and that he was a highly talented writer. He began as a poet, and published several books. We are denied the texts of any poems, but titles like *One Who Dreams*, *First Frost* and *Bubbles of Gold* are unpromising, and in the end he accepted his lack of poetic talent. His prose is another matter. His ability to re-create rooms and scenes in every detail (especially those of his childhood) is remarkable, and the exteriors of people are seen with Dickensian vividness.

Father's movements were quick, jerky, like a bird's. His hair was so dark as to seem black; he wore it parted on one side, brushed smooth, and in front was a cowlick like a jaunty crest which gave him an alert appearance. His forehead was narrow at the temples, sloped slightly backwards from the fairly thick-lensed gold spectacles he wore. His nose was large and florid below his small-pupilled hazel eyes. His moustache was sandy red. His lower lip was slightly full, his chin firm, his teeth uneven. He was always very neatly dressed, and this was all the more obvious because of the fact that the majority of Southern men made a rather sloppy appearance even to my eyes. Father wore high patent-leather shoes. You could see the ends of his long drawers under his black hose socks when his knees were crossed. He smoked cigars, used the brass spittoon constantly.

A photograph of Henry A. Inman shows the accuracy of the verbal portrait. Pictures of Arthur himself show a plump-faced pouting baby, a young man with petulant mood and anxious expression, hardening into a face still anxious but more severe, with furrows in the cheeks and pouting mouth now decisively turned down. The attention to physical appearance in the description of his father was invariable, so that almost all of the "talkers" are physically individuated in relation to size, clothing, speech, manner, even walk and posture. Their romantic, erotic or hard-luck stories are set down at length, and with genuine interest. Arthur gave them advice and sympathy as well as money, doing his best to play a eunuchate part in their lives. They included, in spite of his prejudices, a black girl and a Jewess as well as literally dozens of others of very various occupations and proclivities. He had a permanent fear of being cheated and blackmailed, but although some of the women and girls were out for what they could get, others felt genuine affection for this curious figure, a permanent child who longed for reassurance even more than for admiration, and for the solace of physical contact more than for the sexual act. "Can't understand how you like feeling so many women", Evelyn said, but although Arthur tried to convince himself that he would like to be "pushed into the maelstrom" of passion, feeling was really enough for him. His attachments, basically emotional, were not confined to women. The many chauffeurs, manservants and general factotums soon became friends rather than servants; and were the basis of much petty intrigue and occasional jealousy. Much affection was given to Dr Pike, who after his death in 1949 turned out to have been bedding Evelyn for twelve years. Arthur's discovery of this led to endless discussions and violent arguments, set down in precise conversational detail.

How do we know that all, or even very much of this is true? The Inman diaries create a world and its people—Garrison Hall and its owners the Machs, complaisant but quarrelsome Evelyn, the reclusive servants, helpers, secretaries, medicine men and near lovers at the court of King Arthur, but is it simply a world of fiction, or did Arthur really live in it? How much is his account of his father's dislike of him, and the constant stress on his early courage and manliness in face of bullying to be believed? Was he merely an impotent "Walter", fantasizing about the sexual contacts he never made? Aaron mentions such problems, but never really tries to solve them. A lengthy medical report (posthumous) at the end of the book suggests that Arthur's physical condition "was cruelly complicated by medical maltreatment", which may well have been true but does not take us far. About the accuracy of what he set down in relation to his personal life, distinct from his rant about blacks, Jews and society in general, one cannot be sure. The overwhelming sense of guilt attributed to Evelyn seems baseless and hence unlikely, as does some of her conduct. The willingness of so many girls and women to be felt at Arthur's bed parties appears unlikely. Some conversations,



During the past two years I have studied the manner and method of a fair number of personal diaries and memoirs. I have come to the conclusion that no very personal record such as this may be written without ceasing the reader to label the author as an introspective and hypochondriacal weakling living, to be unwholesome and execrable degree, within himself.

In the second half of the book Bakin establishes a broader base for his rehabilitation of efficient autobiography, linking it first to the idea that narrative is endemic to our daily self-awareness, that we habitually turn our experiences into stories; secondly, to the idea that

In the years between these two points France's life was mostly ordinary enough - a series of variously grim lodgings in London, mornings at her typewriter (which she hid in the wardrobe when the National Assistance Inspector called, in case he should seize it), afternoons at the cinema, halfhearted

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The unworliness and passive obedience of the Janet Frame described in much of this book are extraordinary. (She was, after all, in her thirties, a published author travelling on a literary grant, not a student straight from school.) In part her innocence is a matter of temperament and is what gives her style its freshness and ability to startle, but it was reinforced by her early history. She had spent most of her twenties in, or in-between mental hospitals in

Her real reason for leaving home was not the death of her father, but her realization that to live in New Zealand, a country scarcely represented in literature but the one imprinted with her earliest memories, was essential for her intellectual freedom. In London, and particularly in London (where she found herself living for a time in a rooming-house with a faded portrait of a ninety-foot-lac beetle), she experienced a sensation of falseness; cabbage trees and muscok-grass were more significant for her, and more in need of description, than the English lilies. The book, and for the time being the autobiography as a whole, ends with a glance ahead at her life as a writer with a "goodness reputation" but committed to living in New Zealand. The rest is being saved, as it may be needed, for her fiction.

Those who score military victories, however, do not always make, let alone win, the peace. In the aftermath of war, as parliament began to distrust the army and the Presbyterians quarrelled with the Independents, Fairfax showed signs of hesitating and equivocation and so lost his pre-eminent position. The army council overruled his decision to comply with parliament's plans for disbanding and the agitators, elected by the soldiers to articulate their grievances, undermined military discipline. Fairfax succeeded in defeating the Leveller But as the army in general pursued more radical courses, Fairfax was overtaken – not only by events but by Cromwell and Ireton. Eighteen months after the execution of Charles I, he was refused to have anything to do with Fairfax retired to Nun Appleton, leaving his political stage to his cavalry commander.

In his new biography, John Wilson displays many of the same strengths and weaknesses as Fairfax himself. The chapters on the Leveller General's campaigns are clearly lively and con-

To compress into one paragraph a difficult argument, running to over two hundred pages is to risk caricature. Even so it will be seen that almost every sentence of the summary above is contentious; Zare's argument is a cumulative (sometimes a circular) one, which rests on the acceptance of each successive step. He has

read widely, but does not meet head-on the arguments of scholars who could have tested more rigorously the case which he mounts. R. T. Kendall's distinction between "epimercolata" and "credal" predestinarianism (in his *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 1980), for instance, is very important for an understanding of covenant theology, but Zaret only makes passing reference to Kendall's book in his footnotes. The blurb speaks of "his masterful command of primary sources" (the quotes from ministers' sermons), but when advancing the thesis of lay influence, so important to his argument, he misses the subtle interplay of popular and unpopular religion, which Patrick Collinson made a theme of his 1979 Ford Lectures (not even referred to in footnotes by Zaret). Perhaps Weber made too much of his case studies — those Luthers, Baxters, Ben Franklins — but at least they satisfied the Popperian requirement of falsifiability. We are thus not able to show that Weber (and Tawney too after him) made too much of *A Christian Director* as the key to Baxter's thought, when in fact it represented an ephemeral stage in his intellectual development. Zaret is less specific, and offers for the most part propositions which, by their nature, are difficult to disprove (except perhaps for his attribution of the apophthegm "No Bishop, No King" to Archbishop Laud). But if we cannot prove the non-existence of "possessive individualism" as a seventeenth-century concept, we can at least affirm the C. B. Macpherson has been challenged on grounds other than on his view of the Levellers.

Zaret is not the first sociologist to read Bun-

This is a harrowing and compelling book: it is an exceptionally fine piece of social history, sensitive, mature and deeply humane exploration of a central social problem and its consequences for social relationships and attitudes, vibrant with implications for the broader social history of the period. It also deserves a far wider audience than that of academic history, not least because of its broader relevance of this case-study of human response to crisis and of the manner in which the prejudices of an age shape its perception of social problems and its preferred solutions.

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The reader will enjoy many of the details which Zaret has assembled in this study. We can resist the Lollard lady of 1543, with the assertion that "her daughter could piss as goodly water as the pritest make any?" But not even the pleasures provided by such incidents and there are many scattered throughout the text – can, in the end, make the central argument, so to speak, watertight.

*The Tudor Parliaments: Crown, Lords & Commons, 1485-1603* by Michael A. Graves (173pp. Longman. Paperback £5.50. 582 49190-8) covers the development of the modern Parliament in the sixteenth century and gives a critical analysis of the historiography of the subject. It is part of Longman's Studies in History series.



## North-west frontier province

J. J. Wilkes

EDITH MARY WIGHTMAN  
Gallia Belgica  
386pp. Batsford. £19.95.  
07134 46099

The Roman province which forms the subject of this scholarly book was created from one of Caesar's three parts of Gaul. The peoples of Belgica, who included the Nervii and were reckoned by Caesar bravest of all the Gauls, occupied a great box of territory defined by the Rhine, the North Sea, the Seine and the Vosges. What is now the heart of a new Europe was once, like Britain, the remote north-west of Rome's Mediterranean empire. In AD 9 the German Arminius destroyed the army of Varus and ended a nascent Roman province of Germany: the legions were to remain for ever along the west bank of the Rhine. We cannot tell how much the brooding presence of eight legions along the Rhine impeded the advance to prosperity under the Pax Romana in Belgica and the other provinces of Gaul. Even so the rapid Romanization of Caesar's conquests offers a striking contrast with the Roman experience in Spain, where two centuries of fighting left the Romans with a still precarious hold over the Asturians and Cantabrians in the north. With Gaul, as Ronald Syme put it, "the calm of acquiescence in the hush of Roman rule and the peace which prevailed was such as to helle the old renown of the Gauls and move Roman and German alike to surprise and even scorn".

In the early days, under the Julio-Claudians up to AD 70, many of the Gallic nobles appear to have embraced eagerly a personal clientship of the Caesars, signified by the large number of new Roman citizens with the name Julius and by the great altar of Rome and Augustus inaugurated at the confluence of the rivers outside Lyon in 12 ac.

For all that, the Roman hold on those whose ancestors had once sacked Rome and scattered the phalanx of Macedon remained fragile. When it came to the actual matter of being governed — registration of property and the prospect of regular taxation — there was a furious reaction. Worse still the imperial treasury responsible was one C. Julius Licinus, a Gaul captured, enslaved and later freed by Caesar. Fraud was bad enough (Licinus was later famed as the inventor of a fourteen-month tax year) but the affront to dignity was too much. In the end the matter was carried through after threats to send in the army.

The role of Druids in these and other troubles appears to have been symbolic rather than offensive. Though in Britain they may have been more potent, it emerges from Edith Mary Wightman's account that after a century of Roman rule they were on the margins of society in Gaul. Thus in the turbulent events of AD 69-70 an uprising in Gaul was well under way before Druids came out of their lairs to proclaim Gallic freedom. Nearly half a century before there had been serious trouble among the Treviri around Trier in the Mosel valley. The dissident was one Julius Florus but his schemes were foiled by his fellow noble Julius Indus, evidently more from instinctive dislike of a rival than from any fondness towards Rome. Indus' own native cavalry appears as a generation later as the Ala Indiana — a permanent regiment of the Roman army — which was for some years around AD 70 based at Clarendon. Perhaps the most telling insight into the special relations between Indus and his like and Rome was the role played by the imperial finance officer Julius Classicianus in Britain during the repression in the aftermath of Boudicca's rebellion in AD 60. While urging the Britons to hold out for better times he told Rome that the rebellion would end only with a change of government, a disgraceful action in the eyes of Tacitus. We learn not from the historian but from an epitaph at London that Classicianus was a Gaul and in fact the son-in-law of Julius Indus.

During the civil wars after the death of Nero, last of the Julio-Claudians, many in Gaul were tempted to find an end to their loyalty to the house of Caesar, even to think of an "Empire of the Gauls". When that enterprise had foundered on old jealousies and revived divisions the truth of their condition was revealed

to them by the Roman general Cerealis, if Tacitus' version of his speech is anywhere near authentic, in a powerful harangue. He recalled how much they had suffered once from the Germans, their own tyrants and civil wars until peace and security came with the Romans. But they had to learn that there could be no order between nations without armies, no armies without pay and no pay without taxation. Everything else is shared, there is no discrimination and there is nothing that is dosed.

The Romanization of Belgica in the later first and early second centuries, under the Flavians and Antonine emperors, is treated in four chapters which form the heart of the book. Their subjects are the growth of towns, rural life, trade and economy, and society, culture and religion. Each is crammed with digests of the evidence from archaeology and inscriptions. Some topics include those treated by Professor Wightman in specialist journals where the evidence is carefully sifted and the argument of others accepted or refuted. Perhaps inevitably some of the vigour and freshness is lost as the arguments are compressed to permit inclusion of much factual description, while what little evidence there is for a narrative history of Belgica in the Empire is, like matters of military history, too severely pruned back for the needs of most readers. Yet the volume repays more than the labour of its reading. What emerges is a remarkable study of the interconnections between a Mediterranean empire and a part of the most dynamic people of central and north-west Europe.

The Romanization of Belgica, though in the outcome all-embracing, was effected by exter-

nal influences upon a population which remained the same as when Caesar arrived. New-comers were specialists of one sort or another — traders or technicians — whose role was gradually taken over by natives. Through such external contact the spread of Roman influence was at first restricted to the great Roman roads across the province, highways to the army on the Rhine. Some, notably the renowned Nervii and the Treviri, left their homes for service with the Roman army, not only in Gaul but also along the Danube and in the imperial guard at Rome. An education of the native upper classes fostered a taste for imported goods from the Mediterranean and the forsaking of a traditional way of life. What were once the exotic possessions of a few aristocrats came mass-produced along the roads now secure for the traffic of merchants. The "native element" which survived in Roman Belgica did so ironically through the medium of imported techniques in metalworking and stone-carving. Notions that there was a native renaissance or even a conscious reaction to Roman forms, expressed through native deities in sculpture and fashions in ornament, are rightly dismissed by Wightman.

The Romans created cities. From these emanated the social and political order of the Roman Empire, rank through public office, with local councils and magistrates codifying the existing ties of nobles and clients. New avenues for a career and an enhanced status above and beyond the homeland were a lure to the ambitious that led over the years to a widening of class differences. If the Roman villa is the most obvious relic of the new order in the

countryside it was the much increased circulation of money among the rural classes that was the most profound change. "To judge by the stones, their wealth was to them both real and important, a compensation for the status they could not claim." If the material evidence for the making of a part of "long-haired" Gauls — a Latin-speaking province of the Roman Empire can, as here, be described in detail, remains still hard to identify the dynamic mechanism of change. For some the Roman army is invoked as the agent of change, others in the first and second centuries AD when notions of "Roman" and "native" are still generally valid. All the some the Roman army surely too often and implausibly portrayed the beneficent nuthur of wholesome improvement. For natives who joined it and survived until full discharge after twenty-five years in Roman citizenship and the privileges of veteran then received were very likely only outward symbols of an enhanced status and transformed way of life. For the rest, and will have been the majority, the imposing taxes and the demands of the nearby Roman army may have been the instrument, as it came year after year and decade after decade.

The extent of slave labour, that distinguishing feature of Greco-Roman civilization, is hard to assess in either agriculture or commerce. The households of the nobles, it may appear, functioned with domestic slaves in commerce and manufacturing; they appear prominent. What has for some passed as realism in classical antiquity is inferred from the new wealth of a freed slave, advertised through a funeral monument.

For all this and much more one must read hard through a closely argued text. Moreover, while Roman Belgica is far from being a pure source of anecdote and colour what there might have been better exploited. This more than a passing reference ought surely to have been made to the inscription (once copied, now lost) recording the will of an aristocrat of the Lingones in south Belgica. The testament of this Roman citizen drawn up around AD 100 included the most precise instructions for the design, building, contents and subsequent maintenance of his mausoleum. Among the tomb furnishings his status was to be of the finest imported marble or the best "labelled" bronze. In front, the funeral altar was to be made of the finest Luna (Carrara) stone and with the finest-possibly carved ornament. The memorial and its surrounding park were to be maintained by his freed slaves, and three landscape gardeners and their apprentices were to be permanently employed. Stern penalties were threatened against those who sought to introduce other burials. Subscriptions from heirs and freedmen were to pay the cost of an annual feast in his memory and the custodians were bound to perform sacrifices at the altar less than six times in a year between April and October. In the matter of the tomb the will requires that it contain all his bedding and fowling equipment: "lanterns, spears, hunting-knives, anares, tolls, line twigs, nets, scarecrows, bathing utensils, liters, a chair, all medicines and equipment of the sciences, a rush-work Liburnian boat — nothing omitted — also all damasks and embroideries. These remarkable prescriptions and catalogues are properly registered through the formula of a Roman testament. The material and content are more suggestive of the great princely graves from five or six centuries before than of the modest and dignified sepulchre of a genuine Roman.

*Gallia Belgica* is a fitting memorial to a scholar whose tragic death two years ago was a blow to her many friends on both sides of the Atlantic. A graduate of St Andrews, Edith Mary Wightman began study of Gaul at Oxford with the encouragement of C. B. Stanger. The text was all but complete at the time of her death and has been prepared for the press by her friends and colleagues at McMaster University. For years to come it will recall the slender and rather severe figure familiar to many conferences and similar gatherings through the 1960s and 70s. Its scholarship is manifest, the argument and analysis clearly deployed throughout. It is the work of a teacher and will serve to sustain her reputation for years to come.

## Entre chien et loup

Evening is halogen and cobalt, huoger  
and nerves, an objectless desire,

jealousy, enthrallment, freedom;  
small disturbances before the train home.

And the word "attrition" is the smell  
of oxidized sulphur in the tunnel!

of disguised pornography,  
We are haggard with frustration, and the sky

has gone more wolf than dog in the interim.  
I glide into a bar and out of harm . . .

In the Rendezvous des Belges there's a man,  
my veering mind does well to rest on;

a man of substance, with his leg braided back  
and his elbows on the zinc, a man of stomach

and slow time, savouring a lager  
from the flaklands: They are north of here,

flinty plains and market towns, where the sun  
at evening is an inflammation

that lasts for hours. The place was home  
for Emma Bovary, a flawless boredom

on which her little sulks were lost  
and all her niceties turned to dust.

She was useful as a scarecrow,  
an elegant figure in a field of plough

craving *Passion! Éclat! Délire!*  
a steamy arrival at the Gare du Nord

where my stick-in-the-mud will take his train.  
I watch him check and pocket his change.

Exulting in that huge equilibrium,  
I get up when he leaves and follow him.

STEPHEN KUMAR

## The dangers of superfluity

Eva Gillies

ANTHONY D. BUCKLEY  
Yoruba Medicine  
275pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £25.  
019 8232543

Having chosen to study Yoruba medicine as practised in Ibadan, western Nigeria, Anthony D. Buckley found himself at the outset faced with familiar problems. It was simple enough to decide to concentrate on traditional herbalist healers, excluding both Western medicine with its attendant quacks and the various Christian and Muslim religiously based therapies. But the traditional herbalists did not agree with each other; each kept the composition of his medicines a closely guarded secret; initiation came expensive; an attempt, in time-honoured ethnographic fashion, to serve an apprenticeship with a healer came to nothing. "I donated a half bottle of gin," says Buckley succinctly, "and left." No ethnographer of the Yoruba can fail to sympathize.

In the end, Buckley decided to work through formal interviews, over a long period, with a few selected informants. In so doing, he deliberately turned his back on the classic approach of English social anthropology. We learn nothing in this book about the patients, their social situation, their relationship with the healer or the involvement of kin or residential groups — only about the ideas on health, illness and medicine of two individual healers, plus a few comments from other informants standing, as it were, in the wings.

This unorthodox method works very well, partly because of the essentially naturalistic Yoruba notions of health and illness. With the important exceptions of smallpox and a particular type of insanity, explanations are not of

a kind that requires knowledge of the patient's relationships with either men or gods. But also, Buckley, well aware of what he is doing, approaches his subject intelligently and conscientiously; and — having chosen to use individual informants — lets them speak for themselves. We come to know the gentle, philosophical Fatoogun and the robustly sceptical Adeshawo very well indeed; and to share the author's respect for them, for their frequent differences of opinion and the (often unformulated) assumptions they share. It is with these assumptions that Buckley is mainly concerned.

Yoruba healers in general believe that much everyday illness (gonorrhoea, headache) is caused by the overflowing of small worms or bugs from the "bags" that, in health, contain them within the body. These creatures are thought to be too small to be seen. Buckley speaks of an indigenous "germ theory", but the important idea is that of a container overflowing, which is associated not only with excess but with the revelation of what should remain hidden. The same idea is expressed in terms of colour: in health, red and white matter is safely contained within the black human skin; in illness, red and white are either inappropriately revealed (as light-coloured blotches or rashes on the skin, as white discharges or semen unnaturally expelled from the womb), or the colours are confounded, as when menstrual blood, red in health, becomes either watery-white or thick and blackish. Even the "normal" revelation of menstrual blood, though necessary, is on this theory dangerous; but in conception, red menstrual blood is held to combine with white semen within the safe concealment of the black female body, to produce a healthy child.

Buckley combines these notions into a series of "images", set up in classic dichotomous fashion — health/illness, hidden/revealed, etc —

though he is careful to point out that he does not regard these contrasted pairs as the only possible way to present his data. Once constructed, however, the parallel lists display their usual power to organize, perhaps polarize, information: the left hand is used for medicine as the right is for food; even Ifa divination, the Ogboni society and what the author calls "the delights of Yoruba number symbolism" are found amenable to dualistic classification. And — if health lies in restraint and containment, yet both requires and is endangered by a degree of revelation — well, there are other containers besides the human body: the earth itself, whose loteritic redness is, in health, masked by the vital thin layer of black topsoil; the inward-looking compound that houses the men of a lineage (but if the lineage is to endure, women must, at whatever risk, be allowed to move between compounds); even the cooking-pot, which must not overflow or (so an informant impressively hints) the order of the universe will be imperilled.

And so the successive articulations build up into a fully fledged Kuhnian paradigm — one which, Buckley claims, is valid for much if not all of the Yoruba world-view. It may be so: the god who brings smallpox and its associated madness can be made to fit in pretty well, and so can both the secrecy of Ogboni and the carefully measured revelations of Ifa. Sometimes, however, as in the discussion of palm-tree symbolism, the new-minted paradigm seems, already, a little strained. As it stands it is undoubtedly elegant; it may also have continuing heuristic value. But — as Buckley himself notes in describing the "perfect little nuts" used in divination — aesthetic perfection, however much we instinctively feel it to be related to logical perfection, does not guarantee it. Meanwhile, however, *Yoruba Medicine*



Traditional African dancers; reproduced from *African Pop Roots: The inside rhythms of Africa* by John Collins (120pp. W. Faulstich, Yeovil Road, Slough, SL1 4JH. Paperback, £5.50. 057201150 4).

is a lively, jargon-free book which, for all its vaulting philosophical ambition, is recognizably about real healers using herbal medicines to cure real patients. It even contains over fifty pages of actual recipes to back up the theory. Perhaps the greatest merit of Buckley's paradigm is that, so far from flattening the Yoruba into a boring sameness, it enables them to differ from one another as fascinatingly and infuriatingly as their ethnographers have always found them to do.

## Myths and movements

J.S. La Fontaine

WIM VAN BINSBERGEN and MATTHEW SCHOFFELEERS (Editors)  
*Theoretical Explorations in African Religion*  
389pp. Kegan Paul International. £30.  
07103 09492

E. THOMAS LAWSON  
*Religions of Africa: Traditions in transformation*  
106pp. Harper and Row. £4.95.  
006065211 X

Over the past twenty years there has been a remarkable expansion of anthropological writing on religion. A volume that took stock of this development, even if limited to Africa, would have been very welcome. *Theoretical Explorations in African Religion*, however, is not the book. Its title, and Wim van Binsbergen and Matthew Schoffeleers' enumeration of the aims of the conference in Leiden in 1979 at which the papers they have edited for publication were presented, raise unfulfilled hopes. The "explorations" never cross the frontiers of a rather narrow parochialism. The papers refer in the main to central Africa, from Zaïre to Zimbabwe. One from an outlying region, Kenya, serves to link the main group with the two papers which fall outside it, both geographically and in subject-matter: these deal with Islam, in Senegal and Tunisia — but their inclusion hardly justifies the implication of continental coverage in the book's title. The work's intellectual limitations, however, constitute its most serious defect. For this, the editors must take much of the responsibility. They complain that the field of students of African religion is small, but they are clearly unaware of its full range.

The various topics addressed converge on two themes: the *rapprochement* between history and anthropology, and a post-Levi-Straussian concern with the social specificity of meaning. Two papers, by the editors, address the old problem of the historical content of myth and come to rather different conclusions. Schoffeleers demonstrates the historical significance of a Malawian myth but admits that his analysis would have been impossible without the aid of independent documentary

evidence from Portuguese sources. Van Binsbergen's intricate analysis of a Tunisian myth ultimately reveals information of local, but limited, historical interest. In their introduction the editors remark that their results raise the question how events become encoded in myth, but they do not seem to have pursued the point.

Some papers are written by historians rather than anthropologists. Terence Ranger reviews the evidence on the Mywat cult in Zimbabwe in the light of new theories about it. In particular and general interpretations of regional cults, Christian Coulon is concerned to demonstrate the convergence of two interpretations of the role of prophets in nineteenth-century Senegal and proposes an alternative which, he argues, is closer to the evidence — although most of that evidence is from secondary sources. Robert Bultman also criticizes existing interpretations of a religious movement in Kenya, Didi Ya Mambwa. Like Coulon, he claims that J. Bachelier's idea of the counter-society is the most useful in understanding such reactions to social change. Neither of them, however, does much more than alter the classification of such phenomena, without making clear what intellectual gains result.

The influence of history can be seen yet again in the emphasis on the analysis of texts, whether these are written (John M. Janzoh) or merely the product of the investigator with a tape-recorder (Johannes Fabian). Their papers, and Wautlier de Mahieu's on two apparently unrelated myths, demonstrate the wealth of meaning that lies beneath the textual surface. They reveal the shallowness of much structuralist analysis and of research which looks for information rather than meaning. Semantic analysis is also the approach chosen by André Droogers in one of the two papers which is not a case-study. His plea for eclecticism does not, as the editors observe, prevent him from making a choice among theories. Yet, as so often, the study of meaning fails to relate it to social action or to take into consideration structures of power and changing power relations. One can only agree with the editors that the study of meaning cannot fill the intellectual vacuum left by the discarding of functionalism and its modern variant, neo-Marxism, on the one hand, and Lévi-

Strauss' structuralism on the other. Not that the editors offer any satisfactory solution either.

This lack of progress stems directly from a failure to appreciate a crucial dilemma which confronts all such studies. Comparative social analysis balances uneasily between the development of techniques to deepen understanding of specific instances and the aim of producing statements of general applicability. Dealing with theoretical and methodological problems means concentrating on the relations between these two poles of understanding. As might have been expected from the pre-eminence of historical and semantic analysis and also from the multidisciplinary approach, the papers in this collection largely focus on particularities; they demonstrate the case for detailed analysis, with a scrupulous attention to contextualization in time and place, and sensitivity to the manner in which meaning is actualized in language and interaction. The two general reviews (Renaat Devish and Droogers) are no more successful in relating specifics to wider theoretical concerns than the efforts of Coulon and Bultman. To hitch their particular wagons to a distant theoretical star, it is left to the editors to set these contributions in a framework which displays their theoretical and methodological significance. The editorial introduction manifestly fails to do this. It is long (nearly forty pages) and self-indulgent; attempting to pre-empt the reviewer's role by providing critical summaries of the papers but without addressing itself to the broader issues. Wyatt MacGaffey's 1972 paper is cited in connection with historical investigation and the comparative methodology it sets out is ignored; the relevance of Richard P. Werbner's study of local variation of poly-ethnic Churches and their relation to an earlier cult of the High God to the region is dismissed with a trivial, punning, in-joke. By convening the conference in the form it took, van Binsbergen and Schoffeleers raised questions which they now set aside rather than answer; arranging the contributions on a diagram representing the intersection of two axes is no substitute for serious discussion of the issues, even if new answers are hard to find.

The clarity of E. Thomas Lawson's response to one of these questions in his *Religions of*

*Africa: Traditions in transformation* is appealing by comparison, although in the end it is badly misleading, however unintentionally. Faced with the question of whether there is a "uniquely African religion" (van Binsbergen and Schoffeleers, p.3), he opts for the strategy of reforming in general terms to great variety but aiming for depth, rather than breadth of coverage, by presenting two case-studies. His choice of the Zulu and the Yoruba for detailed treatment implies their representativeness, but inevitably neglects several elements which are widespread but happen not to occur in these two areas. In some cases, like that of spirit-possession, there is a good literature which justifies a mention it does not get; in others, like that of royal rituals and periodic festivals which celebrated and enhanced political roles, the omission is much more serious; since both Zulu and Yoruba offer examples of these. Professor Lawson's account presents religion as the world-view of the ordinary person, an ethnocentric approach characteristic of the West. While he shows familiarity with the methods of (some) anthropologists, he has not understood their intellectual position and tends to treat their writing as a mere repository of "facts". He pays lip-service to the widespread and early influence of Islam in Africa but goes on to present the transformation of traditional religion as the effect of its interaction with Christianity. His readers cannot be blamed if they end up believing that Aladura Churches are the modern version of Yoruba religion, not realizing that some Yoruba individuals are Muslims and some belong to a whole spectrum of Christian Churches, and that some rely on a variety of ritual techniques while still others are nearly agnostic. There is no modern entity that can be labelled Yoruba religion, and the problem of understanding religious change is more complex than Professor Lawson appears to recognize.

Olatunbo O. Olatunji's *Features of Yoruba Poetry* (267pp. University Press, Ibadan, distributed by Oxford University Press, £13.00 19 575306 2) contains sections on Yoruba praise poetry, Ifa divination poetry, Yoruba incantations, proverbial expressions and riddles; there is a section on the general features of Yoruba verse and an extensive bibliography.



# The reader to determine

A. J. Minnis

JESSE M. GELLRICH  
The Idea of the Book in the Middle Ages:  
Language theory, mythology, and fiction  
292pp. Cornell University Press. \$27.50.  
08014 1722 8

Jesse M. Gellrich's ambitious and sometimes overreaching book seeks to build on the work of scholars like Huizinga, Auerbach, Curtius, Singleton and Robertson, who have helped to assess the place of literature among the various cultural forms of the Middle Ages. It also sets out to reconsider the grounds on which this position may be established in the light of structuralist and post-structuralist theories of language and literature. The result is one of the most successful attempts yet to apply contemporary literary theory to medieval poetry.

In a way which is exhilarating, but on occasion expensiveness, the earlier chapters move from the text as a consumable object, God's Word, and Nature (in all its medieval senses) to what Dr Gellrich terms "the medieval Text of cultural forms", from authentically medieval notions of mythology and fiction to mythology as the "storehouse of a culture's lore", including religious doctrine (here following Lévi-Strauss). One wonders if such an imposition of many senses both medieval and modern produces not "a galaxy of possibilities for meaning" but rather confusion. Is this not to reiterate Babel instead of coping with its consequences?

Yet, however much one longs to prune the

author's hyperbolic terminology, and however much detail one may want to add and argue over, his enthusiasm is infectious. Moreover, as an expositor of medieval semantic ideas Gellrich is often sharp and stimulating, as when the bones of "speculative grammar" are made to live. Previous interpretative models which reduce rather than illuminate are firmly rejected: for instance, he will have no part of Robertsonian pan-allegorizing. The Bible is very different from medieval fiction, Gellrich declares, because the latter specializes in doubt – an excellent example being afforded by Chaucer's *House of Fame*, which is read as "a work of provocative experiments in structure, authority, and the determinacy of meaning". Analysis of the "reading episode" of Peol and Francesca in Canto Five of the *Inferno* has become *de rigueur* among medievalists schooled in contemporary literary theory, but Gellrich's approach, which rests on the premise that Dante's language is "interpretive rather than mimetic", is quite fresh. The significance of the *Comedy* is located not in its identity with Holy Writ (which is polysemous because divinely inspired) but in its distance from it: "his book is not a copy of the heavenly Logos, but only an effort to discover it". The *House of Fame* also is supposed to be concerned with the problem of the eubority of linguistic signification, but there it is the difficulties of finding fixed centres of reference that are revealed, and left unresolved.

Somewhat less convincing is the view that the prologue to Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* is a deliberately self-undermining narrative which often fails to "make complete and convenient sense of what we read", this

being the basis of the pleasure it gives to the readers who, unlike the God of Love, can appreciate the "value of indeterminate form". And the final chapter, which reaches towards *The Canterbury Tales*, is disappointing. To take up a single point from it, there, as elsewhere in Gellrich's book, Plato's *Timaeus*, which had its medieval day in the twelfth century, is afforded a validity which it certainly did not possess in later centuries when Aristotle bled away. This is a symptom of the book's tendency to see medieval aesthetics as a single seamless web, thereby simplifying the diversity, crises and revolutions in ideology which characterize that period.

Gellrich is concerned to find indeterminate meaning at all costs, but surely what medieval texts usually offer is a range of semantic possibilities, each of which is fixed to a considerable extent, rather than indeterminacy in the contemporary sense of the term. How, then, should literary deviations from the medieval norms be regarded? Not as indeterminacy, I suspect, but rather as carefully limited subversion, or indeed as reversal and inversion, a

good example being Chaucer's "visions" of Dido, Cleopatra, Phyllis and other women he chooses to portray as "saints". In this and similar invocations against the grain, the rules of the game are clear and controlling; the "world upside down" is still the world, and, as everyone knows, norms shall be reinstated when the Carnival is over. Critics of *The House of Fame* and *Legend of Good Women* should, in my opinion, be looking to Bakhtin and not to, say, early Barthes.

If the hypothesis that "historical factors deeply embedded in language" is correct, it follows that those historical factors are full descriptions in their large dimensions of fine details. However talented the historian may be, he cannot understand the textuality unless he pays careful attention to specific contextuality. *The Idea of the Book in the Middle Ages* has achieved much, but all due credit should be rendered, for issues it raises merit fuller consideration which is a mark of their great importance to medievalists.

## Laws against learning

D. E. Luscombe

STEPHEN C. FERRUOLO  
The Origins of the University: The schools of Paris and their critics, 1100-1215  
380pp. Stanford University Press. \$45.  
08047 1266 2

In the twelfth century Paris was the foremost educational centre in Europe, but it attracted many critics. *The Origins of the University* focuses on the careers and the work of these critics. Stephen Ferruolo argues that their educational ideals – their belief in the unity of knowledge, in the need to adhere learning freely and willingly, and in the higher purposes and the social importance of education – first inspired the scholars of Paris to join together to form a single guild and thereby create the first true university. To establish this claim, he has to refute two other possible explanations (he calls them myths): that the university developed in order to meet diverse utilitarian and professional needs; and that it was established by scholars in order to secure their freedom from the control of local authorities. As regards the last explanation, Ferruolo is probably right and certainly thorough in showing that conflict with the diocesan authorities was not the reason for the emergence of a corporation. As regards the former, he argues skilfully and at length that the masters did not pursue a utilitarian approach, which would have led them to set up specialized guilds for medicine, law, arts and theology. Rather, a professional awareness of common values was the reason why the masters formed one university.

This is an important and informative study in which, however, the significance of the warnings of critics of the schools against specialization and narrow professionalism has been exaggerated. Ferruolo rightly observes that leading monastic critics such as Bernard of Clairvaux and William of St. Thierry rivalled the most prominent masters in respect of learning and scholarship; monks had not ceased to matter in the world of learning after 1100. Many of them wanted to convert scholars into monks, and many renowned masters in the schools, like Odo of Solers and Alan of Lille, did transfer from their positions in the schools to the monastic life. But the attempt by Bernard of Clairvaux in 1148 to demolish the teachings of Master Gilbert Porreta in fact the last serious challenge by monastic spokesmen to the schools. The authorities in the Church more and more backed the scholars. It is easier to suggest than it is to prove that the religious orders in the twelfth century, by struggling to keep secular studies out of the cloister and by remaining uninvolved in the work of the schools, contributed to rather than retarded the formation of the university.

Other critics of the schools were satirists and humanists. The satirists found a common theme in the decline of learning. Since the law

has reigned, the arts are useless", wrote Châtillon. The arts may be called like this, they destroy the body, weary themselves, and do no material benefit. The poor scholar presented not so much an ideal as a gentile ideal. Humanists also complained about the decline of learning. John of Salisbury held that only the excellence of the arts given by masters as capable as William of Chartres had enabled the arts to survive vocationalist challenge; but Abelard succeeded in Paris by dialectical, flawed by specialization. As for the lawyers, Gratian reported the view expressed in Paris: "the days will come when law will obliterate the knowledge of letters". Only law drew men to the study of law, said Peter Blois: vanity and ambition. The lawyers, however, had mainly withdrawn from schools; by and large their writings were used there, so it is questionable if the masters drew back from over-specialization as a result of their publication.

There remains another group of critics: teachers themselves, who are considered only on account of the sermons composed by the theologians among them. Sermons undoubtedly an important source of knowledge about the moral guidance given to students. Theology masters had to preach as well as teach courses. Ferruolo studies the second half of the twelfth century when and to advantage but overlooks the other positions of these masters, and in his prefaces they provided. In spite of the biases of the humanists and others, a long list of teachers continued to make study in Paris popular after Abelard's day and at the expense of other urban centres. The formation of the university was primarily the achievement of the masters themselves, not of their critics, as they did not define their ambitions only in terms of the pulpit. Because Ferruolo is here concerned with the positive achievements of the masters in transmitting knowledge, he is intransigent in his criticism. He is, however, and usefully so, on criticism of the masters' positive achievements of the masters in transmitting knowledge. He is, however, and usefully so, on criticism of the masters' positive achievements of the masters in transmitting knowledge.

However, when Ferruolo finally states that the "institutional" changes that took place shortly before and after 1200 and which transformed the schools into the university, he is convincing in his analysis and successful in his argument. The respective contributions made by the masters and by external authorities, as he says, the statutes provided in 1215 by the University of Courton would have pleased John of Salisbury because of the wide range of subjects required to be studied in each of the seven faculties. For the same reason, however, he would also have pleased Hugh of St. Victor, a very great teacher whose abbey ceased to be in the mainstream of school life in Paris but whose ideas had been so effectively presented and widely

## Avenues and escalators

Dorothy Galton

THOMAS D. SEELEY  
Honeybee Ecology: A study of adaptation in social life  
201pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.  
£28.40 (paperback), £10.50.  
0691 08391 6

In its author's words *Honeybee Ecology* aims "to reduce the imbalance between physiological and ecological study of honeybee social life" by focusing "on how honeybees live in nature and why their social organization has the design that it does". Thomas D. Seeley concludes that the social system is "not one of a despotic queen endlessly dominating the reproduction of thousands of worker-daughters, but rather one of workers themselves benefiting by providing for the well-being of their queen, the individual whose reproduction provides the best avenue for propagating their genes". The queen benefits from the altruistic acts of worker-daughters, a notion which my unscientific turn of mind accepts with difficulty.

There are no native honeybees in the Americas; all have been imported from Europe over the past 400 years. Italian bees (*Apis mellifera ligustica*) predominating. In order to find bees of as nearly pure breed as possible, Seeley worked with feral honeybees in woods around Ithaca, NY, but he cites many other sources, mostly American and West German, in thirty-two pages at the end of the book. Nine chapters bring together recent research, including the author's own, on reproduction, nest-building, food collection, communication systems, and many of the points are illustrated in graphs and designs. A final chapter draws some interesting comparisons between the social organization of the bees studied and those of tropical countries – *A. mellifera*, formerly *Adansonii*, the African bee, and Indian bees which the

author has studied in Thailand.

In my view many behavioural traits in bees which have only recently been scientifically explained were known to our earliest ancestors, who raised nests in tree-boles or on grass for the sweet honey, giving rise to mystical beliefs of which some still persist. In ancient India, for instance, or where *A. florea* nests could be watched on trees at eye level, bee dances could be seen because they are conducted in the open on the flat top of the nest. Early laws (of Ireland, for example) record that the bee owner had to follow his swarms if he was to lay claim to them as his, so that he had some idea of the distances bees might fly; and a beekeeper could watch bees on flowers and know that they collected coloured material on their bodies where it is visible (pollen), though the problem of nectar and its conversion into honey would remain much more mysterious. All kinds of knowledge of a visible kind relating to honeybees, as to other animal life, must have been handed on from generation to generation until some of it was written down by Aristotle and other Greek and Roman writers on natural history.

So those who have worked with honeybees will find in this book confirmation and explanations of many characteristics with which they are familiar (though they will be surprised to learn that bees' flight distances are greater than is normally supposed). Attempts to explain (and, alas, to change, for example by artificial insemination) bee behaviour are of comparatively recent origin, many dating only from the present century: communication systems (bee dances, odours, sounds), mating behaviour of queens and drones etc. It has been easier to study flying bees (foragers, twenty-three days old) than in younger honeybees working within a hole or hive. As the author says, worker honeybees are "organized into largely non-overlapping age groups, each of which handles a distinct set of tasks" (a val-



A paper wasp's nest in construction; reproduced from *Insects in Camera* by Christopher O'Toole, with photographs by Ken Preston-Maitland (194pp. Oxford University Press. £14.95, 0 19217694 3).

able set of diagrams illustrates this on page 33); and of the period from birth up to eleven days Seeley tells us that "further studies at the level of individual honeybees are needed to understand the importance of nest architecture and spatial efficiency in shaping the honeybee's age polyethism schedule" (behavioural change with age). A problem which is not mentioned is that there is not only a shift in bees' activities, but also in the populations engaged in these activities, since each bee is to a greater or lesser extent younger than the one preceding her. The narrative misses the dynamics, the rhythmic movement of the bee nest, which can be likened to a series of three escalators, with crowds pushing in at the top and moving out at the bottom on to the next one.

There are indexes of authors and by subject (but in the latter the name Nasonov is twice wrongly spelt, though it is correct in the text). In the list of sources, two Russian authors could have been included – E. K. Es'kov and S. A. Popravko, some of whose papers on sound communication in honeybees and on the composition of propolis respectively are available in English translation from the International Bee Research Association.

## Boreal and boggy

Richard Hornby

OLEG POLUNIN and MARTIN WALTERS  
A Guide to the Vegetation of Britain and Europe  
238pp. Oxford University Press. £17.50.  
019217113 3

Oleg Polunin, Martin Walters and Oxford University Press deserve some congratulation on their bold attempt to present an attractive and readable account of the vegetation of Europe. There are 110 superb colour photographs of habitats with very informative captions, large numbers of maps and nicely drawn diagrams, and outline drawings of nearly 1,000 of the more distinctive species of the European flora.

One cannot, however, pretend that *A Guide to the Vegetation of Britain and Europe* has been a total success. In attempting to attract different sectors of the market, the book may fall to satisfy any of them. As an academic exercise in vegetation classification it falls down badly because the coverage of both vegetation types and species is too patchy. The classification has not been derived by objective treatment of hard data. It is rather a subjective distillation of the authors' wide experience. Particularly as there is no summary of the classification, or key to vegetation types, serious botanists will find it difficult to locate the section closest to a particular type, or references to affinities with other types, or other parts of Europe. The academic use of the book is also seriously limited by the lack of references to synonyms in other more rigorous works.

It is not meant for the expert, perhaps it may meet the needs of the travelling naturalist, enabling him to put a name to a few more of the species he comes across on his holidays, but other books will be needed in support because this one makes no concessions to families or identification features. There is a fair chance, furthermore, that it will not cover or even allude to the vegetation of the region that the British tourist may choose to visit. There are many omissions in the range of plant communities, particularly in the more artificial habitats. Natural communities are comprehensive-

ly reviewed, but most of the surface of Europe receives barely a mention.

The *Guide* has a section on National Parks and Nature Reserves, so we may be forgiven for thinking that its main purpose is to review European vegetation and direct the reader to good examples of each type. Unfortunately this is where it comes most seriously unstuck. There are no cross-references between the text, the plates and the list of National Parks and reserves. The only indication of vegetation within these areas is very brief and highly generalized, with very few references to species. The list is sadly unrelated to the text in any way, and gives the impression of having been lifted verbatim from elsewhere.

British vegetation appears as little more than an afterthought in the section on "Atlantic" vegetation which stretches from Portugal to Norway and includes most of France. The primary division into climatic regions has not worked well and makes the information less accessible. The way that vegetation types transcend climatic zones suggests that another approach might have been tried. Most of the references to British woodland, for example, are not to be found in the Atlantic section but under Central European vegetation because of

the wide geographical range of the main tree species. A more worrying problem is that Scottish and Irish peatlands receive barely a mention because they are akin to the Boreal mires of northern Scandinavia, but the Boreal climate zone is not considered to extend as far as the British Isles. It may be that on a continental scale our upland mires are merely impoverished outliers, but such an approach is hardly likely to appeal to the British book-buying public. The treatment of lowland unimproved meadows and calcareous grassland is so sparse as to defy all but the most assiduous searchers. Also notably lacking are any references to the effect of management history, eg, coppicing, on our woodland flora. As the serious botanist is unlikely to be satisfied it is a pity that more effort was not made to appeal to the wider non-specialist audience. The inclusion of mosses, while the treatment of higher plants is so uneven, serves to emphasize how the book falls between two stools. Nevertheless, its standard of production is very high, it is copiously illustrated and the text is accurate and almost free of irritating errors. The classification of vegetation in an area as large and diverse as Europe is an incredibly ambitious undertaking which few botanists would have dared to attempt.

After Dr Daoud's death, Ali Al-Rawi found that none of the original specimens remained in the herbarium, and he was obliged to prepare a new comprehensive collection. The line drawings have lost definition in the reproduction, but there are a great number of excellent colour photographs, taken by Daoud. The unfocused backgrounds of these, pipelines, oilwells and oilfires and banks of shifting sands, well illustrate the problems of collecting in such a country.

Information on desert flora is at present scant, yet the number of people who live in desert regions, and the rapid rate of "desertification" makes it increasingly valuable. Botanically this is a scholarly and impressive work, and it is to be hoped that it will encourage further productions from the University of Kuwait.

Matthew Jebb

HAZIM S. DAOUD and ALI AL-RAWI  
Flora of Kuwait  
Volume One: Dicotyledoneae  
224pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £45.  
07103 0075 1

The last *Flora of Kuwait* to be produced was nothing but a small pamphlet, regarded by David Frodin (*Critical Guide to the Floras of the World*) as "a singularly miscellaneous work". This new *Flora*, mainly compiled by the late Hazim Daoud, Professor of Taxonomy at Kuwait University, is both thorough and complete, although its value must depend upon how quickly Volume Two can be produced.

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